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FIGHTING

THE

FLAMES!

OR

TWENTY-SEVEN YEARS IN THE MONTREAL FIRE BRIGADE:

A RECORD OF PROMINENT FIRES, THRILLING ADVENTURES, AND HAIR-BREADTH ESCAPES,

TOGETHER WITH

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT;

BY

WILLIAM ORME McROBIE,

(Late Captain Salvage Corps.)

MONTREAL:

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THE FIRE BRIGADE.

HEARTS beat when rapturous tales are told,
  Of battles fought and won,
Of deeds of valor bravely wrought,
  Beneath the noon-day sun ;
But could the silent midnight hour,
  Each mystic deed proclaim,
The poet's pen would be inspired
  To praise the fireman's name.

When silence reigns o'er all the earth,
  And darkness spreads her pall,
When high-born youths have left their homes
  To fill the banquet hall ;
When peasant poor in lonely cot
  Has sought his couch of rest ;
When feathered warbler from the grove
  Broods o'er her downy nest ;

When lonely sentry keeps the watch
  That burglars' deeds require,
When from some towering bell peals forth
  The midnight cry of fire !

'Tis then our fireman band reveal
  Their nobleness of heart,
And rush, forgetful each of self,
  Assistance to impart.

And not for pay their aid is given—
  The poor and wealthy share ;
For each alike with willing hand,
  The dangers brave and dare.
Perchance beside some castle great,
  The flame's are sweeping bold,
Where miser strange with whitened locks,
  Hoards up his treasured gold ;

Or by some lonely, rural cot,
  In anguish shrieking wild,
A mother craves some fireman's aid,
  To save her sleeping child.
He pauses not, but rushes through
  The flames' hot scorching breath,
To gain and save the treasure there,
  Or boldly meet his death.

How oft we read of perils great,
  Of actions kind and true,
And yet how few o'er all the earth
  To firemen give their due ?
But time will yet proclaim the praise
  Of those who thousands aid,
And rich and poor alike will cry,
  God bless our Fire Brigade.

PART FIRST.

CHAPTER I.

I entered the Fire Department in the year one thousand eight hundred and fifty-three, at the age of fifteen years, as a torch-boy in the Queen Engine Company No. 5, located on Wellington street, Griffintown, then one of the worst places in the city for rowdyism. Nothing particular occurred until the summer of the next year, when I received my first promotion, from engine torch-boy to branch torch-boy. This promotion came about thus:—I had served all winter, gaining in popularity with the men, and when the spring came round, the Company had their usual monthly drills. On one of these occasions I had to pass a corner frequented by one of the worst of the many gangs who nightly congregated to insult passers by. I had crossed to the south side of Wellington street, the engine house being located on that side, before I discovered the presence of these roughs. I had, therefore, either to retrace my steps, or take my chance of running the gauntlet, that is, of being "tripped up," or having

a shower of tobacco juice squirted over me, or something worse. Well, I did not hesitate long; pride and self-conceit (I won't say courage) gained the day; the pride and self-conceit belonged to me, the courage to the uniform I wore. Just picture to yourself a youth of about four feet six inches, with a red Garibaldi coat, much too large for him, a leather helmet on his head, containing about sixteen yards of flannel as padding to make it small enough; a broad leather belt with the name "Queen" painted on it; a regulation hose-key of that date, almost touching his heels, and you have a true description and picture of your humble servant as he appeared on that summer evening, and I dare to say there is not a boy in the world who would not have felt as I felt on that occasion, with right on his side, that he was prepared to stand up and do battle for the name engraved on his belt, the title of that noble woman who reigns over a country on which the sun never sets. Enough—I marched on to face the foe, and I doubt if ever Wellington, Nelson, Napoleon, or even Julius Cæsar himself, ever felt more determined on the eve of a great battle, or more flushed with pride after a great action had been won, than I felt as I entered between the ranks and came out on the other side unmolested by the gang of ruffians. But although I had not been either "tripped up" or spit upon, the danger was not

passed. I had gone but a short distance, when words of a most provoking nature reached my ears. Flushed with my success so far, and chafing under the insulting words uttered, I turned round and retaliated, when one of the biggest, ugliest, and who afterwards proved to be the most cowardly of the gang, stepped out and told me to walk on, accompanying the order with a torrent of abuse. Well, I did walk on, but it was not *away;* I went back toward the bully, saying, if there was one in the crowd who was man enough to show me fair play, I would go into a vacant lot close by and box the coward who had insulted me. As is usually the case, the bigger the bully the greater the coward; and whether it was my size that shamed him, or that he had seen game in my eyes, I don't know, but I have my own opinion of the cause of his declining my offer, and skulking away like a whipped cur, while some of his companions got up a "hurrah;" for, bad as they were, some of them were manly enough to appreciate courage. This little incident preceded me to the engine house, and I remember to this day, with no little pride and emotion, that I was taken by the broad belt by one of the Company, a stalwart Highlander named Grant, held out at arm's length, placed on top of the engine beam, and told to "crow, now, little bantam!" I was there and then promoted to branch torch-boy, no

mean position, in my estimation, at that time. From that day I became very popular, and gained the good will and respect of the officers and men, and shortly after, at the age of sixteen, I was enrolled a full member of the Company, two years sooner than the Corporation by-laws allowed, and, I have good reason to believe, the first and only one who ever entered the Montreal Fire Department under eighteen years of age. Again, I recall with pride when I marched up the centre of the meeting-room, surrounded by those stalwart and noble men, on my name being called out to receive my first quarter's pay as an able-bodied fireman.

But, although I had been promoted, and gained in popularity, it was not all sunshine with me. I had my ups and downs—more downs than ups—but I bore them all with a patience worthy of my calling. One of my greatest troubles was that unfortunate uniform previously mentioned. Every time I had to don it, it was with mingled feelings of pride and dread, pride at the thought that I was one of those noble firemen who were ever ready to risk health and even suffer death itself for the protection of life and property; dread at what I had to encounter on my way to the engine house. The big boys would shout after me with jealousy, while the small boys would follow me at a respectful distance, gathering in numbers as I pro-

ceeded, and by the time I had reached my destination there would sometimes be as many as twenty or thirty boys at my heels, and the men of the company would laugh and shout, "Here come the little Captain and his escort." While it was fun to them, it was not so to me; but, no doubt, I must have presented a very comical appearance, and I am satisfied, had Barnum been then in the show business, I should have been picked up and exhibited as one of the greatest curiosities of the age.

But my troubles out of doors were small compared with my troubles indoors. I would persist in hanging my uniform in the hall, and more than once many an old lady has been frightened almost out of her wits as the door would be suddenly opened, displaying to view those gorgeous habiliments of a fireman's glory, the long red coat, bespattered with mud; the leather helmet, surmounted by the king of the forest, with wide open mouth and tail erect; the broad leathern belt, with the reaper-like hose key polished to a nicety. Many a long and weary hour have I spent in front of the cooking stove in the kitchen, where rotten stone was cheap, polishing my hose-key. But if I persisted in hanging my uniform in the hall, my sisters were as determined that it should not hang there, and many were the scenes that occurred; for, when I would go

out in the morning, it would be all right; but when I returned at night, it would be all wrong, or would be all gone, and no doubt my poor helmet had often to do duty in a foot-ball match around the kitchen, after the most approved Rugby fashion; but after battling manfully for a long time, I at last had to succumb, in a manner that made me the laughing-stock of the whole neighborhood for many a long day. My sisters had not disturbed my drapery for some time, and I had made up my mind that I had at last wearied them out. Still I had very grave doubts on the matter, and something seemed to whisper to me to look out for breakers ahead. It would have been well for me had I listened to these whisperings, as the sequel will prove.

One Sunday I had just returned from church, and was sitting down to dinner, when the shout of "Fire!" came ringing in my ears, and there was a tremendous "hubbub" in the streets. I sprang for my uniform. Quickly putting on my coat, and tightening my belt around my waist, and grasping my helmet in one hand, while I flung open the door with the other, I rushed into the street, and, clapping my helmet on my head, down came a rush of something all over my face, neck and breast, almost blinding me. I did not discover at the time what was the matter, but I found out afterward that my sister had stuffed a large package of self-raising flour

around the flannel lining of my helmet. But I had no time then to investigate the matter; duty called, and I must obey. The fire was in the stables of the Grant Hotel, now the American House, on St. Henry street, close by. It was then thought a great thing to give the first alarm, and get your engine first to the fire. The distance was pretty equally divided between three of the engine houses, so off I started at a break-neck pace, upsetting numerous small boys, and old women's apple-stands. What a sight I must have looked! No wonder the children ran screaming into their mothers' arms; no wonder the mothers picked up their little ones and rushed into their houses, locking the doors after them. I firmly believe that had not the black smoke just then been seen rising over the tops of the houses, and the fire bells heard ringing out a general alarm, I would have been secured and incarcerated in the Beauport Lunatic Asylum as a first-class subject for that worthy institution. But no matter; I had done my duty; the engine was out in quick time, and, bounding along to the fire, had first water. The stables were built of wood, and after two or three streams had got to work, they were not long in extinguishing the flames. But how was I getting along all this time with my self-raising flour? Well, what with the perspiration running down my face, and the heat of the fire, I had become a regular

CHAPTER II.

I will now very briefly sketch over a few of the most prominent injuries I have received, to illustrate some of the hardships a fireman has to undergo. I would just here like to remark that it is with considerable reluctance I enter into the details where I have to appear so prominently, as I feel very sensitive over the thought that any one should believe, as the saying goes, that I wish to "blow my own trumpet."

In order to show how unnecessary it is for me to sound my own praises, I may tell you how fully that has been done by other and disinterested parties. I have been mentioned in what would be termed in military parlance "Official Despatches," no less than 164 times since the year 1853, the articles speaking of injuries received, daring heroism, life rescued, promptness and coolness in action, and so on. I confess I do feel honestly proud of my printed record, and prouder still to think that long after I have gone to that bourne from whence not even a "fireman" ever can return, the members of my family, and their succeeding families, may refer to

these records, and honor the memory of their relative dead and gone.

The first accident which occurred to me, of any account, was in the spring of 1858, at a fire on St. Paul street, opposite the Bonsecours Market, in a large wholesale store filled with grain. My company were doing duty in the rear, the hose being run up a ladder to the third-story window, whilst the butt of the ladder rested on the top of a shed in the yard. I was at the branch, and only two of the members of the company had arrived, and were engaged in pulling up hose and letting on the water, so that I was alone on the ladder. I could see the dim glare of the fire over the top panes of glass in the window, and when I felt the water coming I prepared to go into it with a will, but very shortly I had reason to change my mind. As soon as I broke the panes of glass over my head with the branch-pipe, a rush of red-hot grain came pouring over my head and down my neck, which caused me to wince; and, in my efforts to change my position, I canted the ladder, lost my balance and down I went, through a hole in the roof of the shed that connected with the cellar, and the cellar trap-door being open, I had to go down another story before I found bottom. To show how little such an accident will impress an old fireman :—There happened to be only one fireman near at the time

who had observed the accident. He was Capt. McNaughton, of Engine Co. No. 2, an old veteran in the service; and when my comrades came to my assistance, and did not see me on the ladder, but the branch pipe playing "snake" all around, they enquired from Capt. McNaughton where I was; the gallant captain pointed to the hole in the roof, and said in his quiet, off-hand manner, "I think your branchman fell down that hole a few minutes ago." By this time others of the company had arrived, and while some of them secured the branch-pipe and went to work, others got a torch and made a search for me. They found me in the cellar, on top of a lot of broken bottles and old barrel-hoops. Luckily the hoops were the most numerous, and no doubt were the means of preventing me from being more seriously injured; as it was, they found me pretty well stunned and shaken up, with a dislocated shoulder and other bruises about the body. Of course, I was taken to the doctor's and had the limb set, and all the attention my condition required, and I had to parade around the streets with my arm in a sling until the usual time was up and I was declared fit for duty.

About this time the city was agitating for a permanent force, and to do away with the volunteers, but the time was not yet come for such a movement. However, on account of the completion of the new

Water-Works, the companies were to be reduced, and the captains of the companies received orders to select twelve men out of the forty and organize them into a Hose Company, and send in their names to the Chief of the Fire Department within three months after the date of receiving orders. This order fell on me like a death blow, as I thought this would end my career as a fireman, when I had only begun to enter into the true spirit of the calling, and was beginning to feel the noble sentiments that should and do inspire every true man that has the welfare of the lives and property of his fellow citizens at heart. This selection of such a small number of men out of a company of forty, and such a company. Every man of them, with one or two exceptions, were *firemen*, and that is saying enough. Of course there were old hands that could not be overlooked, and there were young daring spirits that were hard to part with, and our captain had no easy matter in hand, you may be sure. As soon as the order was made known amongst the members, every man was determined to put his right foot foremost, to be, if possible, one of the chosen few. The three months allowed were drawing to a close, and still our poor captain had not made his choice; but soon it began to be whispered around that the twelve had at last been chosen, and I was *not* one of them, but the thirteenth—that is, the first on the roll of the

supernumeraries, of which there were to be three. I need not tell you that I felt that another blow had descended on my head to damp my ardor. I thought that it was a true saying: "Thou art so near and yet so far." But good fortune came to my assistance in such a shape that I could not have wished better. Three days before the captain had to hand in his reports to the Chief of the Department and Fire Committee, a fire occurred in the green-house of the Honorable Justice Torrance, on Mountain street. His grounds were surrounded by a high wall, and the only way of getting at the fire was by the main entrance, and the fire occurred right alongside of it; the flames were very fierce, the gravel on the walks with the borders enclosing them being actually on fire. When I arrived the captain was urging on one of the twelve, who happened to be No. 12, to make his way further with his stream to cut off the fire from the main building, which was in great danger; but, although he was a good and brave *man*, he lacked the dash and spirit which is required to make a good *fireman;* and I found out after that it had been a hard struggle with the captain between us two. I was the captain's favorite, but there were some unfortunate black marks against me and some of the other young bloods, about some pranks that had been played around town, and a few false alarms

that had been got up at rather unseasonable hours, to get some of the old fogies out of bed; but luck was with me; as soon as the captain saw me, he called to me to take the branch and fight my way to the main building and save it. I did not need to be told the second time. I grasped the branch, called for more hose, and rushed down the gravel path, playing right and left; in fact, what with the excitement of the time, and the prospect of my still having a chance at the eleventh hour, I did not feel the heat until I had got nearly to the centre of the building, but I soon commenced to feel my feet getting very uncomfortably hot, and fancied that I was standing on the top of a red-hot stove, and I was told after that had I entered into a dancing competition with the same spirit, and kicked around and showed as many fancy steps, the wild red-man of the forest in his war dance, the Spaniard in his Spanish fandago, or the Highlander on his native heath in the Highland fling or sword dance, could not have compared with me. Be that as it may, I had the satisfaction of being thanked by Captain Cooper for what he considered keeping up the reputation of the company, and still more satisfaction when the glad tidings was conveyed to me that on account of the bravery just displayed, I had become one of the twelve. I need not tell you that there was some tall dancing and some fancy steps

indulged in, when I received the glad tidings which would have eclipsed anything I had performed on the gravel path. And thus I became one of the "Twelve Apostles," a name that was given to the company on account of the captain's name being "Peter," a name they retained until their disbandment on the re-organization of the Fire Department in 1863.

In the fall of 1859, the City Council again brought up the question of a paid Department, but as there were a number of good men who had served three or five years, and consequently only required three or four years longer to place them on the exempt firemen's roll, which would give them certain privileges and exempt them from certain taxes, &c., the Council deemed it unwise to entirely break up the Brigade, but decided to place one permanent man in each engine house. And now commenced another tug of war.

I was requested to make application for the position by the company to represent them, but I would not consent at first, as there were quite a number in the field—all men of longer experience than myself, one captain and two lieutenants—but the company seemed determined that I should consent to be nominated. I therefore left myself in their hands, and Capt. Cooper being a very strong man in election times, backed up with a petition signed by

every man in the company, I was duly appointed, entered on my new duties on the 24th day of April, 1860, and again commenced a new era in my life in the fire service. There were nine new men appointed, and from that date commenced a friendly, although determined rivalry, that is kept up until this day, and, no doubt, was greatly the means of making the Montreal Fire Department what it has been considered for some years—second to none. The spirit I had displayed in my previous services in the Volunteer Department was not relaxed, but, on the contrary, I became determined to make a man of myself or die in the attempt. As to my success in the first, I will leave it an undecided question, as far as I am concerned. As to the second I more than once came near succeeding. There were a great many tricks resorted to by the different men to gain prominence. One thing I can look back to with a clear conscience, I never resorted to anything that I need be ashamed of; but I have often puzzled the other men as to how I got out so quick. Well, in the first place, I slept, as the saying goes, "booted and spurred," that is, always in harness; and I was well backed up by the men of the company, who were a wild lot of young fellows, around at all hours and very seldom missed anything. In fact, to their assistance, and the sagacity of a noble dog, which will receive due attention

hereafter, I may attribute a great deal of my after success in the Department. The only thing approaching trickery that ever I had recourse to was the giving to carters a premium for the first or an early alarm, and by paying them well and becoming a favorite with them they were of great assistance to me.

The first year of my permanent service was a heavy one, and that was the year the Prince of Wales visited Canada. The Prince, as no doubt many of you will remember, was the guest of the Hon. John Rose, on Simpson street, well up on the face of the mountain, and the season being very dry, all the wells had run dry, and I was detailed with a hand engine under my charge, to supply the house with water. The engine was manned by the regulars then in Montreal, and what with the extra duty, street parades, torch-light processions, fireworks, &c., I had my hands full; but it was just the thing I liked—lots of work, lots of excitement, and lots of fun.

FIGHTING THE FLAMES.

POT-ASH FIRE.

The first time I was disabled after I became a permanent member of the Brigade was in the spring of 1861. A fire occurred in the pot-ash inspection store on College street. The cellar and first flat were under water, and there were three or four feet of water on the streets around the store, the lower part of the city being flooded at the time. All the hydrants in the vicinity were under water, so that we had to duck under to take off the cap of the hydrant, come up to take breath and duck down again to couple the hose—anything but a pleasant task on a cold March day. When I arrived, some of the companies that were there before me were putting their hose into boats to reach the scene of the fire. A thought struck me: "Now is the time to make a strike." The dry parts of the streets were lined with thousands of people, so I put the whip to my horse and dashed into the water. He took to it like a duck. I got my hose coupled on, and

work with a will, and succeeded in mastering it after a hard fight of over an hour. In the excitement I did not notice the absence of the remainder of the Brigade, but after I commenced to look around I discovered that we were alone, and not liking to take the responsibility of leaving the ground without orders, I sent one of the men for the Chief, and while he was away I started to have a look around, to see if there was any fire yet lurking amongst the beams. I was groping my way in the dark, when I stepped into the open hatchway, landed on the other side on my nose, bounced back, struck an oil barrel in my descent, and landed in the story below, with a broken nose, disfigured head and face, dislocated arm and other bruises. Rather an amusing incident occurred at the time: One of the men was on his way into the building, and was near me when I struck. I got up and made for him, wanting to know what he was doing in my road. I was out of sorts, so much so, that when a policeman, seeing me bleeding, asked me, "What is the matter? Are you hurt?" I told him to mind his own business. I sat down on a doorstep, and became so stubborn, that I would not give any one any satisfaction; but I became so weak that they lifted me into a carriage and conveyed me home, and sent for the doctor. After he had examined my injuries and attended to them, I thought things were all right; but when

he came to dress my head and discovered my broken nose, he informed me that the broken nose was the worst part of my injuries. I don't think I ever suffered so much pain as I did when he passed the silver instruments up my nostrils to put them in shape. He urged me to stand it, or I would have a disfigured nose for life. Well, it never was a beauty, but I stood it as well as I could. I was confined to bed for a considerable time, as I was pretty well shaken up, but, at last, I was once more reported fit for duty.

CHARLEBOIS & SHARPE'S FIRE.

Again, at a fire in the wholesale grocery store of Charlebois & Sharpe, Notre Dame street, I came near losing my life, through the too often careless and sometimes wilful habit of leaving trap-doors open. On this occasion the fire commenced on the ground-flat under the hatchway, and communicated with the upper stories, and had gained considerable headway before the Brigade arrived; but it was only a short, sharp struggle, and the fight was over. My company had fought their way up to the top of the building. The night was a bitter one,

and as soon as the flames had been extinguished, and the fierce heat had died out, everything began to freeze and become solid ice. I had the branch, and as my hands were becoming very cold, I placed one through the handle of the branch pipe (our branch pipes had leather handles rivetted to them, so that one or two men could take hold of them and handle them better), and both into the large pockets of my fire coat, and calling for more hose, I stepped forward to where the fire was still showing itself, intending to give it a last dash of water, and then pack up. As is usually the case at most fires, we can easily find our way *into* the building, being guided by the light of the burning fire; but it is generally a different thing to find our way out again. On this occasion, it was quite dark, and in walking toward the remains of the fire, I stepped into one of those "man traps," or I might say "death traps," that cause more injury to firemen than almost any other single thing I know of. Down I went. The distance I would have fallen had I not had my arm through the handle of the branch pipe, would have been three and a half stories. As it was, I dropped about nine or ten feet, when I was brought to a sudden stop. Had I been a heavy man, I believe my arm would have been torn from its socket; as it was, it was jerked out of the socket, and there I hung in mid-air until my

comrades released me from my perilous position, and after the usual treatment I became once more fit for duty.

CONNOLLY & CO.'S FIRE.

Not long after I went on duty, I met with an accident, not then considered serious, but the effects of which will remain with me as long as I live. This accident happened at a fire in the wholesale liquor store of Connolly & Co., St. Paul street. The fire broke out in the cellar, and we had shoved in our hose through the iron bars of the cellar-window and damped the flames. I then proceeded to break into the store to get into the cellar; and knowing pretty well the interior of the building, I groped about in the dark and smoke for the ring in the trap-door, and at last found it, and taking hold of it, I lifted up the trap, thinking that it was in two halves, as is usually the case; I stepped, as I thought, on the other half, to give myself more power to throw back the trap; but, instead of stepping on the other half, I stepped into the hole, and down I went, head first. As I stepped into the trap-hole, I let go my hold on the ring. Down came the door, caught me by the ankle, and kept

me suspended midway between the two floors, head down—a position I did not at all relish, as the cellar was full of smoke, and as hot as an oven. The Chief had followed me into the building, and as I went down I let one of those unearthly yells that a person will naturally do, when taking such a sudden departure for the unknown regions below. Our late lamented Chief, although a very religious man, muttered something about that "so and so," which certainly would not have passed muster at a church meeting. But, with Chief Bertram, to think was to act, and, calling for help and light, they discovered the partly-open trap. Although I was nearly suffocated, I still had presence of mind to call out to them to catch me by the leg before they opened the trap. They took in the situation at once, and I was pulled up more dead than alive. I did not seem much the worse at the time, and it was not until some three or four months after that I discovered it was of a more serious nature than I had supposed. It has since cost me a great deal of trouble and anxious thought; but, thanks to care and good medical treatment, I have almost recovered. Still I feel the effects of it sometimes, although it happened over twelve years ago.

THE ATWATER FIRE.

Not long after this, a fire occurred in the oil and varnish stores of Atwater & Co., on St. Nicholas street. Although I did not receive any serious injury at this fire, still I passed through scenes that are likely to make a lasting impression on my mind, and which led me to give myself up for lost. Long before the alarm had sounded, large volumes of smoke were seen ascending toward the sky, and I had no need to ask where the fire was. I made all haste, but "the more hurry the less speed." The streets in this locality are very narrow, and paved with round stones, and are very dangerous to drive through; but, with the sight before me, the flames roaring so that they could be heard blocks away, I forgot my usual caution, and just as I turned the last corner my horse came down so suddenly that I was sent spinning clear over his head, and brought up against a stone wall on the opposite corner. I am not aware if I made any impression on the stone, but one thing I am aware of, that it made an impression on my head, but not enough to disable me. The Brigade went to work with a will, and although the building was packed from cellar to roof with the most inflammable

material, fortunately, it was surrounded by thick, high stone walls, and after two or three hours' hard fighting, at last it was mastered. It was by this time ascertained that all the employees had got out with the exception of the storeman. I was ordered, along with others, to make a search for the missing man. We turned over all the burnt timbers, but could not find him, and were beginning to hope that after all he might have escaped, when one of the employees told us that the last he had seen of him was alongside of the varnish tank, and that it was his duty to attend to it. He also told us that it was a habit of the storeman to get up on the side of the tank with a light to look into the main hole in order to ascertain if the varnish was ready for running off. He said he saw him in that position, when he heard a terrible explosion, and knew nothing until he found himself in the street. From what we had been told, we came to the conclusion that the storeman was in the tank, which was eight or nine feet deep, and six or seven feet wide. We were ordered at once to go to work and empty the tank; but after we had bucketed out the water and came to the varnish, we found it no easy matter. The varnish had become cold and very hard, but we went to work with buckets and shovels. We could only work two at a time in the tank. I had been in the tank working for some time, and had got

within two feet of the bottom, and we were just beginning to give up all hope of finding him there, when my shovel struck something hard, and laying it down, I scraped away the varnish with my hands and disclosed the fleshless knee of the unfortunate storeman. My fellow resurrectionist, being a new hand in the Department, and not having seen anything like that before, became sick, and requested to be pulled out of the tank, which was done. I would have liked very much to have followed suit, but pride deterred me, and I requested that another man should be sent down. I had in the meantime stooped down and commenced filling the buckets, which took some time, and after filling them I straightened myself up and called on them to haul up, but received no reply; after I had called out again, and still got no answer, I looked up, but could not see the top, as there was a thick smoke around the top of the tank, and I thought I heard a dull noise. There was a burnt rafter sticking endways in the varnish. I laid hold of this and dragged myself up to the top, leaving one of my boots sticking in the varnish, and was not a little astonished and alarmed to hear the flames roaring around me, and the different companies calling for water. The fire had broken out afresh in the cellar, which was stored with oils and varnish. My comrades had, on the sudden breaking out of the

fire, forgot all about me, or else, thinking that I had heard the alarm, had made my way out. But there I was, eighty feet back in the store, surrounded by fire and smoke. For once in my life, I came nearly losing my presence of mind, and giving myself up for lost. I had faced death before without flinching; I had received injuries nearly causing my death, but on such occasions death never entered my mind; but now, to meet *such* a death! I cannot find words to express my feelings. It was not like falling down a hatchway, being buried under bricks and mortar, or any other of the many dangers that our firemen from time to time have to face; but—to be surrounded by fire and smoke, and die a slow death—I had become quite unmanned, and nearly lost my senses; I was not the dashing, daring "devil" who had entered that building a short time ago. What was the matter? Was it the utter disregard of death that kept me riveted to the spot? Was I a coward, to die without making some effort to save myself? No! Like a flash of lightning my wife and little ones came into my mind, and, although I had never once thought of myself when in perilous positions, it was not the first time that the thought of my little ones had come into my mind. I was very much attached to my family, and the thought of leaving them unprovided for had more than once given me a good deal of anxious thought and

trouble. But now, to be cut off from them, and never see them again! The thought put new life into me; so, bracing myself up, and knowing that a blind man generally has acute hearing, I shut my eyes tight, commended my soul and the care of my wife and little ones to God, and started towards the noise in the street, keeping as much to the right as possible. I clambered over the fallen timbers and *debris*, and landed in the street, and, as I was told after, what, with my begrimed appearance, my boot off, and covered from head to foot with varnish, I looked, as I emerged from the burning building, more like the "evil one" coming out of the regions below than like a man. I must not trust myself too far in giving expressions to my feeling at that time. It was probably the first time in my life that I had recognized God's great power and goodness. The fire that had been raging in the cellar was not put out until the cellar was flooded. We then resumed our work of extracting the unfortunate storeman from the tank. After a short time his remains, such as they were, were taken out and placed in a coffin, and as the body was being removed from the premises the screams of his wife, the pitiful and bewildered look of the fatherless children, the sobs of many an onlooker, and what I had just undergone myself, left an impression on my mind not likely to be forgotten or erased.

THE MARCOU FIRE, JANUARY, 1863.

A DESPERATE LEAP AND NARROW ESCAPE OF A YOUNG GIRL.—EIGHT PEOPLE RESCUED.

A fire occurred on a cold January night in 1863 in which, had it not been for the two ladders tha were in use at the Court House (that building undergoing repairs at the time), no doubt there woulc have been eight lives lost. The fire took plac shortly after midnight, in the fur store of J. L. Marcou, facing the Court House square, and only abou 100 yards from my engine house, but it had gainec considerable headway before it was discovered. I broke out at the foot of the stairs, in the rear of th building, and cut off all communication from th three stories above, in which lived two families Jules Hone, his wife and two children, in the secon story; Mr. Marcou, his wife, one child, a youn man named Henderson, Mrs. Marcou's brother, an a servant girl. When the police knocked at th door and shouted "fire!" it did not take us long t get out, and as soon as we had cleared the door w came in full view of the scene, and a fearful scene i was. The smoke was coming out of every window the fire was in full blast in the rear, at the botton of the stairs. We quickly went to work, and spu

out our hose, but the water being cut off in that part of the city at night, it took sometimes ten or fifteen minutes to reach the hydrant. As if ill luck was following us, the fire alarm box was out of order (water running into it during the day and the works freezing at night), not only delaying the water, but preventing the remainder of the Brigade from coming to give us the assistance which we were so much in need of, especially the ladders. As soon as I found out the trouble, I despatched a policeman to the nearest box to sound the alarm, and a sleigh to the nearest hook and ladder station. All this took but a short time. I then went to the rear of the building and told my branchman (John Beckingham, as good a fireman as ever lived, of whom I will have occasion to write hereafter) the state of affairs. He said it was too bad, and paid a very high compliment to the Water Works, which it is not necessary or prudent to record here. I told him to stick to his post, and as soon as the water was on to go for the stairs, never minding the front shop. He answered, "All right! go to the front; I can manage this myself." As I was running out of the gateway, to get around to the front, I met my hydrant man in a fearful state of mind. He called out to me that there were people jumping out of the front windows. He still kept running into the yard which I was leaving. I called out to him to come back,

and help to do something. (Although he was a good fireman, he entirely lost himself when brought face to face with such scenes as he had to witness that night.) He said, "Oh, no! I can't go there." By this time I had arrived in front of the building, just in time to see some of the bystanders picking up a girl from the top of a double window, which had been thrown from the third story. This girl had taken off the window and let it drop in the street, then wrapped a fur cloak around her shoulder, and deliberately jumped. With the exception of a few slight bruises, she was none the worse; one of the most remarkable escapes from instant death I have ever heard of. I had no time to attend to her; there were still eight people in the building to be rescued, and I knew it would take some ten minutes before the ladders would arrive. All this time the hoarse shouts of the men and the shrill screams of the women could be heard a long distance off—enough to paralyze the spectators. I looked up to the window. There stood Mr. and Mrs. Hone, with a child in each arm, imploring help. In the next story was Mrs. Marcou, a ten months' old child in her arms, in the very act of throwing it down into the street. I jumped into the middle of the street and called out to her, "For God's sake do not throw down the child," to wrap something around it and herself and lie flat down on the floor, and I

would be with her in a minute; she still hesitated. I implored her to do as I told her. I said, "You know me; if I promise to save you I will do it," although I did not know at the time how I was going to keep my promise. All at once the thought of the ladders in the Court House came to my mind. The night engineer of the Court House was standing by me at the time. I said, "Bill, get the ladders under the pillars." Quick as thought, off he went, followed by half a dozen willing hands. In a short time back they came with two ladders, and placing one against the window of the second story, where Mr. and Mrs. Hone stood imploring aid, I was up the ladder in a twinkling, and had both children down; then Mrs. Hone, Mr. Hone following down after. Mrs. Marcou was all this time in the third story calling for help with the child in her arms. The flames were gaining and ascending the stairs; we tried to place the ladder up to the third story window, but found it too short. Mr. Devins, who kept the drug store opposite, rushed into his house and quickly returned with two blankets. We laid the ladders together, and spliced them with the blankets, and raised them to the upper windows. We found them too long, but had no time to take them down and resplice, as Mrs. Marcou was threatening to throw herself and child from the window, so that we had to draw the butt end out into the

street, to allow the upper end to drop into the window. This done I mounted the ladder, and as I passed over the part where the two ladders were spliced, I felt them sway under me, and expected every moment to feel them part; but I had no time to think of the risk; or, if I had known that I would have been hurled into the street the next moment, my duty was *up* the ladder, not down. I ascended as quickly as possible, and taking the child in my arms, and telling Mrs. Marcou to keep quiet, and I would be back for her in a moment, it did not take me long to descend the ladder, and placing the little one in Mr. Devin's arms, I ascended the ladder again, having more confidence in the strength of the splice. As soon as I reached the top of the ladder I told Mrs. Marcou that a great deal depended on herself as to whether we would get down safely or not. I told her to be steady, not to forget herself, but to obey any orders I would give her, and not to look down. I never saw a woman show more presence of mind under the like circumstances. My readers must remember that it was a cold January night, or rather morning, and to get upon the sill of the window and crawl out on the ladder, with nothing on but her night clothes, and the wind howling past us, was no easy task, when a strong gust would almost sweep both of us off the ladders that were swaying up and down,

threatening every moment to give way under our united weight, and hurl both of us into the street below. Step by step we backed down, I carefully placing her bare feet on each round of the ladder, and telling her all the time to keep up courage and we would soon be safe. We had just passed that part of the ladders where they were spliced with the blankets, which was about half way up, when the tinkle of a reel-bell was heard in the distance. The crowd which had collected in the street at this critical moment did a very unwise thing, and although, no doubt, it was done with the best of motives (and the terrible scenes that were transpiring before them, to a certain extent, justified them); but, at the same time, it was very nearly the cause of undoing all I had done, and sending us both headlong down the ladder. One of the crowd called out, "Well done, Mac, good boy!" This was the signal for the crowd to send up a cheer. I did not know what it meant at the time. It might be that the ladder was giving way, or that the flames had reached Mr. Marcou. I looked up and saw that he was all right. I felt Mrs. Marcou tremble. I knew well that if she lost her presence of mind then that both of us were gone. I said to her, "For God's sake keep up your courage, it is all right; it is the remainder of the Brigade coming to our assistance." I urged on her to come along, and she

regained her courage, which must have been terribly shaken—for I think it is no disgrace to myself to admit that I was considerably agitated, and I question if many men would have behaved as well as Mrs. Marcou did on that occasion. At last we reached the ground, and while some of the crowd caught Mrs. Marcou in their arms and carried her into the engine house where her child had been taken, the crowd sent up another cheer, which celebrated two events, viz.: the rescue of Mrs. Marcou and child, and the safe arrival of Mr. Marcou at the bottom of the ladder. I thought that our work was ended, and that all were out, when a shout came from St. Vincent street, leading into the back part of the building, where my branchman was quietly waiting for the water, "For God's sake come here; there is another one at the back!" I ordered down the ladder at once, and had it brought around, and off I went to see what was the matter, and as I was running under the archway I met my bold hydrant man running out as if he had been chased by a thousand wild Indians, tomahawk in hand, reaching for his topknot. (By-the-way, he never had too much.) As soon as he saw me he said, or rather roared, "Look dere," pointing to something black lying on the snow, "dere is dat poor fellow, dead!" I asked where in the name of thunder—or stronger language—he was running to;

why he did not pick him up. He said, "No, tank you, I can't do dat," and off he went in the opposite direction. I saw it was of no use to waste time on him, so I ran to the object I saw lying on the snow, expecting to find the lifeless body of poor Henderson, who had been forgotten all this time in the exciting scenes that were going on in front of the building. Stooping down and grasping hold of the object, I found, to my great surprise and joy, that it was only a Buffalo coat that Beckingham had thrown out of his way on entering the building. I was not kept long in suspense, however, as to the position of poor Henderson. I heard a voice from the upper window calling out, "For God's sake, get me down out of this, I am suffocating and roasting." I looked up and saw a head sticking out of a broken pane of glass in the window. The crowd were just then coming into the passage with the ladders. We quickly raised them, but the width of the passage being only about nine feet we could not get them near the window, as it was almost perpendicular, and reached up over the eaves of the building; there was no time to think, however; there was a human life to be saved. So up the ladder I went, and as I reached the splice I looked up and saw him half way out of the window, reaching for the ladder. He caught it and drew himself out of the window, and swinging himself on to the

ladder, he threw both his arms and legs around the sides, and started down in that manner. Luckily for him and myself, I discovered the manner in which he was coming down, or we would both have been hurled to the bottom. As soon as I saw what he was doing, I placed my arms round the ladder and braced myself up, and I had no sooner done so than down he came, like a battering ram, bump on top of my head. I think I saw an unusual number of stars in the heavens, but it saved both him and myself. He never stopped, but passed down over me to the ground. I don't think I ever saw a man go down a ladder so quickly before or since. There was another feat that young Henderson did which astonished me, and has puzzled me very much ever since. I cannot see how he accomplished it. The building was a very old one, and the windows were of the old French style, the panes of glass being only 8 x 10 inches. He had got the inside window open, but he could not get the outside (or as, they are called, double windows) off, as they were generally made pretty secure for the winter. He broke a pane of glass (cutting his hands and face very badly), and getting his head out, managed to attract our attention. He then, in some unaccountable manner, got out the remainder of his body, and caught hold of the ladder as before described. On this occasion Henderson showed considerable

pluck, as well as family affection. When the fire was discovered, he ran down stairs and tried to put it out, but it was too much for him, and he had to jump out into the passage through the back door. In talking the matter over with Beckingham in the engine house after, he told me that as he was lying down in the doorway, somebody jumped over him, through the fire and smoke, and rushed up stairs, muttering something, like "My God! my poor little Jennie!" and Mr. Henderson told me that after he had tried to put out the fire, and found he could not do so, he jumped out at the back door, being badly scorched about the face and hands. But, when he recovered himself, he thought of the people up stairs, and especially his little niece, and on the spur of the moment he rushed up stairs. When he arrived at the top of the first landing, the smoke was so dense that he became confused and lost his way. He managed to grope to the top story, when he at last reached the window from where we rescued him. I would not be doing justice to Mr. Henderson nor to my own conscience did I not place on record my admiration of his heroic conduct that night. I think I am safe in stating that I can never, in my long experience, recall a man who went through so much with such an amount of coolness and bravery, and retain his presence of mind. I have known dozens of men

succumb to one-half of the trials he had to pass through, for the smoke was very dense, and he was badly bruised and cut up with glass. The escape of the servant girl was another wonder to me. Fifteen minutes after her miraculous escape, she was taken to the Richelieu Hotel and put to bed, so I had no chance of seeing her that night. I went to see her the first thing in the morning, and was told she had gone back to the house. I went there, expecting to see her in bed, maimed and bruised, but imagine my astonishment when I saw her washing dishes in the kitchen. Had anyone told me such a thing, I would not have believed it. All the others speedily recovered, and for once I have the pleasure of recording a serious and dangerous fire unattended by loss of life.

A KNOWING DOG.

MY DOG CARLO—INTRODUCING NUMEROUS FIRES AND AMUSING INCIDENTS—SERIOUS INJURIES AND HAIR-BREADTH ESCAPES OF THE AUTHOR —SAGACITY AND FAITHFULNESS OF THE DOG.

Let us go back to the fall of 1860. I had received the present of a young dog from a friend of mine. I will not say he was handsome, but he was good, and on many occasions proved a true friend to me. One very remarkable thing about him was his tail. He had one of the most magnificent appendages to wag that I have ever seen on one of the canine race. Another remarkable thing about him, and one that troubled me—he was a most contemptible coward, and would stick his tail between his legs and start off at the bark of the smallest cur. As he grew in stature and strength, however, he likewise grew in courage, and before I had had him three months he was quite a favorite, and commenced to follow the reels to fires. At first, he would follow us as far as the corner, then he would stop and look after us, give a few "bow wows," and put back to the engine-house. By and by he ventured a little further, until at last he became a

regular attendant, and never missed a fire. Anyone seeing "Carlo" (that was his name) bounding along the streets with his tail elevated skyward, might be sure the reels were not far behind. The first time I saw him show pluck, and go into a fight, was at a fire in Griffintown. The foreman of the Wellington street Station had a small Scotch terrier, and just as I arrived at the fire a large mastiff dog pounced on the little fellow. Almost every company had their dog, and after they became acquainted it was touch one, touch all. Well, as soon as Carlo saw the big dog pounce on the little one, he made for him in a style that gave me unbounded pleasure, and forgetting all about the fire for the time being, I clapped my hands and shouted, "Go for him, Carlo, go for him, old boy! give it to him!" and so on. By this time the other reels were arriving, and as each came up headed by their faithful pup, the said pups piled on the unfortunate dog that had caused all the trouble, and the last I saw of him he was making toward the canal at full speed, with all the Brigade dogs howling after him.

Although Carlo was becoming quite a pugilist around town, and especially at fires, there was one dog which used to take the curl out of his tail, and it was amusing to watch the antics of those two dogs when they met each other in the street. This

was a large bull dog, belonging to a fruit dealer on Craig street, and I had very often to pass his store on my way to the Central Station on business. The store was on the north side of the street, the same side that the Station was on. Carlo always accompanied me, but took care to keep on the south side of the street. As soon as the "apple" dog saw me he would get up from his post at the door and look around, knowing that Carlo was not far away. Then commenced the sport. The apple man and myself would stand together and watch the movements of the two dogs. First, Carlo would come sneaking along close to the walls of the houses on the other side of the street, with his tail between his legs. Then Mr. Bull would step across with his tail erect; all this time they were drawing nearer to one another. This would go on for some time, until Mr. Bull thought that he was near enough for a dash. Then he would make a rush at Carlo, but it was of no use. If Carlo could not fight him, he could run away from him, so he "sneaked" and ran away; but he "lived to fight another day," and that day was not far distant. Not long after this an alarm struck which brought me along Craig street, and the reels had to pass the apple store. Carlo, as usual, was bounding along in front of the horse, barking. As we neared the fruit store, I saw Mr. Bull on the footpath setting himself for a fight. I thought, Mr.

Carlo, your barking will turn to howling before long, but I was mistaken this time, for Carlo had either forgotten all about his opponent in his excitement, or his blood was up; and, considering himself on duty, kept straight on until at last he came opposite the other dog, which was trying on his cutting-off style as usual. He might have saved himself the trouble; Carlo did not mean to run away this time; he meant fight, and, as he spied his adversary, he doubtless thought of the many indignities heaped upon him, and, burning for revenge, he jumped out of the track of the reel and made straight for his enemy. Jumping on him, he chewed him all over the head, and came bounding after the reels. I do not believe that bull dog ever knew what happened to him.

Carlo had now become a dog of vast importance, and the men of the company, hearing of his victory over the bull dog, petted him the more, until he became so proud of his fighting abilities that he became a terror to all the small dogs in the neighborhood. One trick which we taught him gave us a great deal of amusement. We taught him so that by making a hissing sound with our mouths he would rush at a small dog and knock him heels over head, but would not bite him. At the same time we would shout, "Come back here, sir," "Get out you cowardly brute," and so on,

and make for him. He would take the cue at once, and scamper off in an opposite direction, as if he did not belong to us. Although this sport afforded us much amusement, it was often the means of getting up a jawing match. Try it, boys; get your dog well trained, and when you have set him on some old maid's pet poodle, hurry up to the rescue, and you will get the lady's grateful thanks for your timely aid, and perhaps ten cents to buy candies.

Carlo now commenced to give his attention to the fire alarm. He seemed to understand that there was something else required of him, besides fighting and hunting small dogs. If he heard a foot running up the footpath at night, he would commence to bark and jump around, and it was always safe to run for the horse on such occasions. At last he got to understand the bells. There was no electric fire alarm then, simply alarm bells on the tops of the engine houses, rung by hand, and the alarms were mostly given by policemen, citizens, dogs, &c. I kept a book in which was recorded who gave the alarms, and out of every ten alarms, "Dog" is recorded seven times until the electric alarm was introduced. The first time I took particular notice of his actions in giving the alarm from the bells I have good reason to remember, as I met with an accident on that occasion, at a fire which occurred in the cricket bat

manufactory of Mr. Peacock, which then stood on the old site of the St. Patrick's Hall, corner of Victoria square and Fortification lane. My family were away in the country, and one of the men of the company was staying with me. We were upstairs, having a little "snack" about eleven o'clock, when, all at once, Carlo set up a terrible howl. I rushed downstairs, while my comrade put his head out of the window to see if there was anyone at the door. He had no sooner done so than he heard the alarm bell; he called out to me "fire!" We "hitched up," and off we went, led on by Carlo, and it was always safe to follow Carlo after that. He never failed in guiding us in the right direction. When I arrived at the fire, I passed my hose through a gate into a lumber yard, and had to climb over a pile of long raft-oars. After passing down as much hose as I thought I would require to reach the fire, I caught hold of the hose to slide down, and, just as I reached the bottom, down came the heavy oars on me. I fell on my back, and was entirely covered up with the exception of my head. Luckily for me, there had been two holes dug to put posts in the ground, and the two mounds of earth that were thrown up on each side protected my head from being crushed, or this book would not have been written. The night was very dark and no one had seen me falling, and the oars were pressing so heavily on my chest I

could not call out. I was fast losing my senses, when all at once I heard something come tumbling down over the lumber. It was my faithful Carlo, who commenced tearing with teeth and claws right alongside of my head, and by his howling and barking he attracted the attention of some of the people in the street. Some of my comrades, arriving at this time, procured a light, and went to work with a will to extract me from my perilous position, poor Carlo howling and jumping around, and doing all he could to assist them. It was well for me that I had such a dog to guide them to my rescue; for, had I remained much longer, it would have been all up with me. As it was, by the time they had uncovered me and taken me into the house of Mr. William Perry, fire engine builder, close by, I had "caved in"; but, after they had given me some restoratives, I recovered my senses, and well do I remember, when I came to myself, the first thing I recognized was my faithful dog Carlo, standing close by me, and the first words I heard were spoken by Chief Bertram, who laughingly said, "What in the name of goodness took you under that pile of oars?" I need not tell you that Carlo and I became firmer friends than ever, and I have no hesitation in saying that had it not been for him, I would have stood a poor chance of coming out alive. As it was, I was badly bruised, and was off duty for some time.

quickly as possible, the last thing he saw was Carlo standing on the very edge of the wharf looking after poor Puss. The boy returned and received his reward, and had not been gone long when Carlo came marching through the square wagging his tail, and looking as consequential and dignified as a well-fed alderman, little Puss meekly trotting at his heels. On looking at them I found both dripping wet, and although I had no means of knowing by what unaccountable manner she had been rescued, there is no doubt but that Carlo had plunged into the rapid current and succeeded in bringing his little helpless companion safely to the shore. Poor Puss was never after subjected to any more drowning; she lived for years after, and died a natural death.

This last noble deed of Carlo had placed one more feather in his cap, and he was the hero of the day. He was also becoming more useful in fire matters; he was gaining in knowledge and 'cuteness, and his means of discovering the exact location of a fire from the different tones of the bells was something remarkable, and had to be seen to be believed. If Carlo was sojourning at the officers' quarters, or inspecting the troops on the Champ de Mars, both of which places he was very fond of frequenting, especially the first, and if you saw or heard Carlo come bounding and barking along, you might make up your mind

there was a fire or an alarm somewhere, and you were perfectly safe in following him. I never knew him to lead me astray; and if the alarm sounded at night, it was his custom to bound up stairs into my bedroom, and putting his fore paws on the bed, he would scrape and bark until he awoke me; then down stairs, and as soon as the horse was hitched and the doors thrown open, he would bound into the square and off in the direction in which he heard the bell, turning around now and then to see if we were coming. About this time there was a fire in the pawn shop of Mr. Moss, corner of Notre Dame and Claude streets. Here Carlo showed himself in another light, and did duty as a policeman. The fire was in the back part of the store, and dense volumes of black smoke were coming out through the doors and windows. When I arrived, I laid off my hose, and telling the policeman to remain at the hydrant to let off and on the water, I knocked off the door-shutter with my axe, when out burst the flames; but the water coming on at this time, I soon beat them through the panel of the door, and, shoving in plenty of hose, I stepped into the shop. Just at this time one of those light-fingered gentlemen who prowl about at midnight, seeking what they may devour, came up and asked me if he could help me. I said, "No, thank you." He was well known by the police, although he walked about well

dressed, and looked as innocent as a lamb. Immediately inside of the door there was a large glass case filled with valuable jewellery. I did not like to leave the spot, and still I wished to take a look around, when I thought of Carlo. Calling him, he came bounding through the hole in the door, and when I said "watch!" he jumped up, and placing his fore paws on the top of the cross bar of the door, and putting his head and breast through the opening, he looked at the light-fingered gentleman, and if he could not speak, his looks said plainly, "So far, and no further." In a short time I made the necessary examination, and having found no more fire, I returned to the door and found Chief Bertram and some of the other firemen had arrived and were standing on the sidewalk looking at Carlo. Carlo looked at them, as much as to say, "I was put here on duty, and I intend to remain until I get orders to go." I drew the bolts of the door, and opening it, let in the Chief. I explained to him what had happened, and he stooped down, and patting Carlo on the head, said, "You are a noble dog."

A strange circumstance happened at this fire which puzzled me very much at the time, and in fact has remained a mystery to this day. As soon as I had got sufficient hose off the reel, and taken the branch off the shaft, my horse started off down Notre Dame

street. I made up my mind he had run away, although I had never known him to do so before. He turned two or three corners until he arrived in front of the Neptune hose-house (then No. 2). It was a double house, having a set of reels and a hook-and-ladder truck, and, consequently, had two men. When the horse stopped in front of the engine-house, the bell on top of the reel attracted the attention of the men, and when they came out and saw my horse and reel, with about fifty feet of hose hanging loose behind, they knew that there must be a fire somewhere near my station. Hitching my horse behind their machine, they drove up to the fire, just as I was about starting to look for him, expecting to find the reels in pieces, but, to my surprise, I found my noble black Charlie, with reels all right, standing quietly on the street; and when the Neptune men told me how they got the alarm, you may believe I felt proud of my little black horse. But I must return to my dog Carlo. Although I could relate numerous other incidents where he showed himself to good advantage, I must pass on to scenes of a more stirring nature. The next time that Carlo became prominent, and where I nearly lost my life, having received a very serious injury, was at a fire which originated in the residence of the late Bernard Devlin, then known as "Tara Hall," on Upper St. Urbain street, in January, 1863. There

had been a large party at the Hall the night before, which did not break up until an early hour in the morning. Mr. Devlin and his brother Owen were about retiring to bed when they discovered smoke issuing from one of the rooms. Owen at once started to give the alarm, and not knowing the locality of all of the engine-houses, he passed three before he arrived at mine. It being situated in the Court House square, and his profession calling him there daily, he was best acquainted with the locality of my station, but the distance he had to travel to give the alarm caused a great delay, and was the means of the fire gaining considerable headway before I arrived, and it was also the cause of bringing the other companies nearly half a mile out of their way, as the ringing of the bell on the top of my engine-house brought them there, and they had to retrace their steps. But while all this was going on, I was at the fire, and doing my best to extinguish it, and I think I would have succeeded had it not been for two or three drawbacks. In the first place, the water was very weak, the hydrant not giving more than twenty-four pounds to the square inch, and the water actually freezing as it passed through the hose, and by the time the water reached the nozzle it was frozen. I took off the branch two or three times and shook the ice out of it, but it was of no use. As soon as I would screw it on, it would

freeze up again, and at last I took it off and threw it away, and placing my hand over the butt squirted away. All this time the fire had been gaining, and at last I had to retreat from the room. After this, the fire gained rapidly, and although the other companies were arriving and taking up their positions, the fire gained on us, and by daylight the handsome, stately "Tara Hall" was in ruins. The building, as its name would indicate, was composed of numerous wings, and what was saved was rescued by sheer hard work in cutting and pulling down. The water was of very little use to us. It was a bitter cold morning, and what with the lime and dirt from the fire, and our clothes frozen stiff on us, we were in a pitiful condition, and looked like a lot of scare crows. It was now about eight o'clock in the morning. We had been working over five hours, and most of the companies had packed up and gone home. My company were about to follow, when I entered the building to take a last look around and see that there was no fire left smouldering. I had just stepped out of the door, when down came the heavy cornice, bringing a large quantity of bricks with it, and burying me under it. My comrades jumped to my rescue at once, and commenced to remove the bricks and timber, assisted all the time by my faithful dog Carlo, for he seldom left me, and it was a very bad burning building that Carlo could

have changed my mind considerably since. My reasons for so changing my mind will be related later on, when dealing with the subject of city councils and citizens' duty to those self-sacrificing men, who risk their health, and often life itself, for the protection of the lives and property of their fellow-men. Before ending the account of this fire, I would call the attention of my readers to a great neglect on their part, which is often the cause of fires obtaining headway, and not unfrequently is the cause of death to those near and dear to them. I am convinced that had Mr. Devlin known the locality of at least two of the three engine houses which he passed on his way to give the alarm, Tara Hall would not have been burned that night, and I would not have received the injury that was so nearly ending my existence. I would, therefore, press on my readers, when removing to a strange locality, the first thing to do is to find out where the nearest engine house is, and where the man lives who has charge of it. This, of course, only applies to towns where there is no fire alarm telegraph, or permanent force. Should they live in a large city, such as Montreal, where all the latest improvements are (or, at least, ought to be) in force, they ought to make themselves at once acquainted with the position of the nearest fire alarm box, the key holder, and how to reach him best, especially at night. From my

knowledge of the good results that would follow if these suggestions were carried out, I would urge you not only to read these suggestions now, and say, "Yes, they are very good," and let the matter drop, but put them into pratical use at once. Another suggestion that I would make is, always keep a ladder about your premises, say thirty feet long. You may never want it in case of fire, but it is always handy to have about; or, should you never want it for your family, it may be of service, if only once in a life time, in the vicinity. I know that there are not many who will incur the expense or take the trouble to do so, but my appeal is made to those of a humane nature, for I could recount many cases where precious lives might have been saved if my suggestions had been in practical use, and where the owner of that ladder, if he did not receive a medal from the Humane Society for saving lives, would have had the satisfaction of knowing and feeling that he had done something for the protection of his fellowmen. While under this head, I would suggest that when you remove to a strange house, let it be your first duty to your family to look into and point out the best means of escape in case of fire. Later on, I will give some of what I consider to be the best methods of action on such occasions.

About this time my eldest son, about three years of age, was in the habit of straying away from the

station, which caused his mother a great deal of anxiety until she would see Carlo come home with him, for wherever Johnnie went, you would find faithful Carlo at his heels, and if he should happen to stray too near the street, or attempt to cross the footpath, it was really a treat to see the manœuvres of the dog. He would step in front of Johnnie, and push him back, and if that failed, he would actually take hold of his dress in his mouth and pull him back, and if Johnnie ever dropped his cake he would pick it up and hold it in his mouth until the little fellow would take it from him. But Carlo's career in the Fire Department was drawing to a close. The march of improvement was going on; the electric fire alarm was gradually drawing to completion, and although I could place on record numerous other cases where Carlo proved himself a dog of no common abilities, I do not wish to tire my readers, and will, therefore, hasten to bring his deeds to a close, and take a final leave of my more than friend. It was something really wonderful to see his antics when the fire alarm gong first commenced to strike for fire. The first two or three times, he would go with us as usual, and after our return he would walk around the reels, look up the stairs where the gong was placed, then go and take a look at his friend Black Charlie, as much as to say, "Charlie, what is the meaning of all this? something is wrong; we are

getting euchred, old boy." Then he would go and lie down, but he would not lie long. He would get up, walk over and take another look up the stairs, then march over to the officers' quarters to consult a dish of hash with Yorking, one of the officer's servants, and see if he could get any information from him. But the oftener the alarm struck, the deeper became the mystery to Carlo, and whenever an alarm sounded when he was at the mess or on the Champ de Mars, and he would know nothing about it until he would hear the small bell on the top of the reels, he would make after us with all his speed, showing distinctly by his manner that he did not approve of our mode of getting the alarm. At last, he seemed to have an idea that his friend Charley had something to do with it. They seemed mutually to break off all friendship. You would not see Carlo lying at Charlie's head, each licking the other. If they ever came in contact with one another, Carlo would growl. Charlie would set back his ears, and make a side shy at him. Things were getting worse and worse every day. Carlo commenced to jump at Charlie when the gong would strike, when we were leaving the station, which would annoy the horse very much. At last, he cut him two or three times, and the horse became so afraid of him that we could not get him out of his stall without a great deal of trouble, and when he was

hitched up and we were mounted, he would rear up and refuse to go out. We tried all we could do to break Carlo of this bad habit. One of the men, as soon as the alarm sounded, would run out doors and get a stick that was kept in the corner for that purpose, and as soon as the doors would open, Carlo would, as usual, go for Charlie, and the man would go for Carlo, and I have seen more than one birch broom handle broken over his back; it was all of no use; Carlo would take up a position farther away to meet us, and jump for the horse, and he never failed to cut him either about the mouth or breast. Things were becoming serious, and I did not know what to do. I did not want to part with him, but something had to be done. One day at an alarm he had cut him more severely than usual, and one of the men was bathing his mouth and breast, and washing off the blood, when the Chief came suddenly around the corner, and enquired how it happened. I told him the whole affair. He felt very sorry, and said it would have to be stopped. Next morning he came around and told me he would like to buy Carlo, as there was a friend of his in the country who wanted just such a dog; he offered me ten dollars. I said I would see about it, and it was not until after the Chief had gone that I saw through his meaning. That good old man was willing to give ten dollars out of his own pocket to

get rid of the dog, rather than order me to put him away, which he had a perfect right to do. But things were so ordered that the Chief saved his ten dollars. At this time we had noticed that Carlo was away oftener and longer than usual. At first we did not think much about it, but when he stayed away two or three days at a time, we commenced looking around for the cause, which we very soon found out. No doubt Carlo made up his mind, through the treatment he was receiving, though he had served his time and done good service, that he was no longer wanted (which has been the case with more than one faithful servant), so he transfered his allegiance from the fire department to the army.

The Royal Artillery were quartered on St. Helen's Island, and one of them used to frequent the station, and Carlo and he became great friends. Carlo would pay a visit to St. Helen's Island, and stay a day or two at a time, and went on making his stays longer, until, at last, he took up his quarters their altogether; and the only time we would see him was when the artillery man would visit us. But what a change had come over that dog. While I felt glad that he had taken to the soldier and got into such good hands, I felt a little cut at the reception he would give me when I would make overtures to him. Formerly a look had been enough to set that magnificient tail wagging, and at the mere words,

"Carlo, old boy," he would jump up on me and caress me; but now he would walk into the engine-house with a proud step, at the heels of his friend the soldier, and never as much as deigned to notice one of us, and if we would call him by name he would look up in our faces, but that was all. As to his old friend Black Charlie, he looked at him as if he would like to go for him. It seemed as if he blamed him for all the disgrace he had got into. There was only one person in the engine-house whom Carlo would in any way recognize, and that was my little boy Jack. When the little fellow would put his arms around his neck, as of old, Carlo would wag his tail and lick his face, and otherwise conduct himself, as much as to say, "You, at least, never did me any harm;" and I am thoroughly convinced that dog knew, although in some unaccountable manner which he could not understand, that his services in the Fire Brigade were not wanted any more, and that we had a rather peculiar way of communicating it to him.

I have only one more adventure of Carlo's to chronicle; then I will take a final leave of my old friend. I do so with a heavy heart, when I look back to the many enjoyable days we passed together, and the many dangers we passed through. The troops that occupied St. Helen's Island were conveyed to and from the island in what were termed

garrison boats by the garrison crews. If Carlo was a favorite in the Fire Department, he was none the less a favorite on the island, especially in the company to which his friend belonged. Although dogs, as a rule, were not allowed in the garrison boats, Carlo was always allowed to accompany his friend when on leave to the city, and knew the hours of departure as well as the men did. If his friend was on leave all day, Carlo would sometimes take a ramble around town, visiting the other dogs of the Brigade (but I am inclined to think he spent most of his time with his friend Yorking at the mess on Jacques Cartier square), but he never failed to show up at the boat at four p.m. Well, it happened that his friend had obtained leave for all night, and that the garrison crew had been changed (which they were, I think, every month). Be that as it may, Carlo put in an appearance at the usual time, just as the boat was about leaving, and failing to see his friend, he decided to take passage without him, so into the boat he jumped. The crew being a strange one, did not recognize him, and pitched him out; but Carlo was not to be fooled in that manner, so in he jumped again, and as often as he jumped in as often was he pitched out, and he had to submit—so the boat shoved off without him. The boat had to be rowed around the Long Wharf, and close in shore for a considerable distance to save the current,

which was very strong at this point, before striking across to the island. Carlo had run around to the point where the boat had to pass, and stood watching it rowing up alongside of the wharf, no doubt thinking that he might still be taken aboard; but when the boat changed its course and made for the island, Carlo's tail went down, and so did his hopes; so, taking a last look at the fast receding boat, he plunged into the swift current and made for the island. He swam nobly, for he was a very strong dog, but the current was too swift for him, and he was going down with it very fast. Still he struggled nobly on, and while some of the crew who were watching him said he would succeed in reaching the island, others said "no," that he would be taken down the river. Some of the soldiers on the island, however, had been spectators of the whole proceedings through a glass; and, seeing his danger, two or three put out in a small boat and settled the dispute by lifting Carlo into their boat; and if Carlo was only known to one company previous to this, he became known to every man, woman and child on the island, and was often sent for by the officers of the garrison to be shown to their friends as the dog that swam from Montreal to St. Helen's Island, through St. Mary's current, for the soldiers maintained that he would have succeeded in landing safely, although not just exactly at the proper landing place. Shortly after

this the Artillery were removed to Quebec, and Carlo accompanied them. I only heard about him once after that. I received a letter from his soldier friend, stating that he had lost Carlo. He wrote that two or three times when Carlo and he were out there were alarms of fire, and as the bells were rung then the same as they were in Montreal before the introduction of the electric fire alarm, he would prick up his ears and dash off at full speed in the direction of the bells, until at last he deserted the soldiers altogether, and no doubt Carlo had gone back to his first love. The troops were shortly after that removed to England, and that was the last I heard of poor Carlo.

SPELLMAN FIRE, 1867.

THE SPELLMAN FIRE.—DEATH OF WILLIAM SHARP. A TIMELY WARNING.—GOOD AND EVIL SPIRITS.

A disastrous fire occurred in September, 1867, in which a brave fireman, named William Sharpe, lost his life, and where two comrades and myself came nearly ending our existence. The fire occurred in the distillery of Spellman & Co., Longueuil lane, and flames had gained considerable headway before the alarm was sounded. Nos. 1, 2 and 4 reels arrived about the same time, and as there was considerable rivalry in the Brigade, each one was doing his best to get first water. Just as I was screwing on my branch and calling for the water, an employee of the establishment called out to me, "For God's sake, don't go in there, there will be an explosion." I replied, "All right, old fellow, we cannot help that; we must do our duty." But I had good reason afterwards to thank him for his timely warning; as, no doubt, that warning was the means of saving at least three lives, my own one of the number. The distillery proper was a large stone building facing on St. Maurice street, and had formerly been a church. If there never had been heavenly spirits moving in

it formerly, it is certain that the devil's spirits were moving in it then. There was a brick addition built at the back, and it was in this addition that the fire originated. After I had placed my men in a good position, I came out of the building and took a look at the walls. It did not require a practical eye to see at a glance that it did not even want an explosion to send them out—in fact, I became satisfied that as soon as the floors gave way, the walls would come down. I entered the building again and ordered my men out at once, and directed them to take up a position on the other side of the building, where they could do as much execution, with less danger to themselves. As I was in the act of directing my men, I perceived No. 1 raising a ladder to the second story window. I called their attention to the walls that were very much bulged out, advised them not to enter, and to keep clear of the window, as it could only be a short while before the whole thing would come down. The foreman of the company said he thought it was all right, and would keep his eye on it; and if he saw any danger he would withdraw his men. As I left to look after my own men, I took another look at the building. No. 1 had by this time got their ladder into position, and the branchman was ascending, with branch in hand. Poor Sharpe was at the bottom, ready to mount after his comrade.

I had only run a short distance when I heard a crash. I ran back and saw the branchman picking himself up from out of a lot of bricks and mortar. Sharpe was lying where I had last seen him standing. He was picked up at once and spoken to, but no answer was returned. He was dead—killed instantly—killed at his post—killed doing his duty, and his spirit had gone to meet its God; and another name had to be recorded on the death roll. Sharpe was conveyed to the fire station a corpse, from whence he had started but a short time before, full of life and health. At the Coroner's inquest it was ascertained that the large stone lintel over the window had, in descending, struck the deceased on the head and fractured the skull. Fortunately Sharpe had no relatives in Montreal to mourn his loss, his widowed mother having died a short time before; his comrades were therefore relieved from witnessing the too often heard-rending scenes that occur on such an occasion.

COCHLAN FIRE, 1868.

DEATH OF SCOTT AND THOMPSON.

I record my next adventure with a heavy heart, as the memory of that awful night comes back so vividly to my mind; but I will as briefly as possible relate a few of the incidents that occurred at this most disastrous fire, wherein two noble young men lost their lives, and where a widow became, as it were, a second time a widow, and where a devoted father and mother lost an only son. This fire occurred in the liquor store of Cochlan & Co., No. 215 St. Paul street, on the 21st of March, 1868. The two young men who lost their lives were Edward Douglas Thompson and Hugh William Scott. The first named was a very promising young man, aged 26 years, the only son of ex-Alderman Thompson, an old and respected citizen, carrying on business in Montreal for over a quarter of a century. He was an officer in the Prince of Wales' Rifles, very high in Masonry and other societies, and, although not a member of the Fire Department, was ever ready to lend a hand. In fact "Ned," as he was called, was very much attached to the Brigade, and did many a good service, and, I dare say, had he been asked what death he would like to

have died, he would have said the death of a fireman. Poor fellow, he died that death nobly. Just as the alarm struck, Ned and his father were locking up their store, which was close by, and as he handed his father the keys he said, "There is Mac going down to St. Paul street; it must be something, so I will run down and see what it is; you need not wait for me, father, I will be home soon." His father called after him, as he ran down the street, "Don't be long, Neddie, and take care of yourself." Those were the last words ever spoken by father to son, or son to father, for in less than ten minutes happy, heroic, spirited Edward Douglas Thompson's soul was in eternity.

The other, Hugh W. Scott, was a noble fellow; noble in every sense of the word; the only support of a widowed mother; true as steel; quiet, unassuming, fearless and manly; but, better than all, a God-fearing man—in fact, too good, it might be said, for the reckless and wild life of a fireman. Hugh had not been long in the Department when, by his steady habits and good qualities, he became a general favorite, and although the other men called him simple Hugh, Sunday-school Hugh, and other such names, there was not a man in the Brigade who did not respect him, and often wish he was like him. He had only been in the Department a short time when he was promoted from

No. 5 Station to be my assistant in No. 2 Station; but, poor fellow, he had only enjoyed his promotion two days when the fatal fire occurred which ended his career as a fireman. It has been said often and truly that after a calm there comes a storm, or after excessive joy comes excessive sorrow, and never was the saying better illustrated than on this occasion. I don't remember ever spending a more pleasant time than the few hours that evening previous to the fire. I will mention a little matter, and still not a *little* matter, which occurred, that will say more than I can on behalf of that young man, and give an insight into his noble character. It was the custom for every new hand coming into the station to pay his footing. I presume you all know what that means; if not, with us it meant that he had to send for a dozen of ale, crackers, cheese, &c.; failing to do so he had a very poor life of it; all hands would be down on him. Well, we had been at Hugh ever since he had come, but he would not "come down." He was called all sorts of names, but he bore it like a man, and, true to his principles, told us that we might dog him until death, but he could not nor would not pay one cent for liquor. He said, to show you it is not greed, I will purchase anything reasonable that is wanted in the station. I need not tell you that those words settled the matter, and Hugh was more thought of than ever

It was the custom of the late Chief Bertram to pay the station a visit almost every night, and many were the happy hours spent, and many a fire-battle was fought over again, and many a humorous story told by that good old man. We were very short of chairs in the engine house. Chairs did not stand us long; when the alarm sounded each man slung his chair from him, and when he returned from the fire he would likely find a rung or two gone. It used to amuse the Chief to see us watching one another for a chance to get one of the chairs. No sooner would one get up than there was a rush for the chair, and ten to one if the unfortunate chair did not come to grief in the scramble. The Chief would enjoy the fun very much, but would say, I must buy you a chair each, so that you will not be fighting over the only two you have. Well, it happened that on this very night, on his way to the station, he was passing Brown's auction rooms, and Mr. Brown was putting up some chairs for sale. The Chief stepped in and purchased four, and told me to send a man for them. Hugh went, and there happened to be a cane-bottomed one amongst them. Hugh claimed it as his own, he having had the trouble of carrying them home; but we were determined not to let Hugh have it, and to have some fun at his expense. Everything Hugh did or thought was done or thought in earnest. We man-

aged to keep Hugh out of his chair for some time, and each one would take his turn in it, much to the annoyance of poor Hugh. I remember I was the last who took my turn, and I told him that I intended to occupy it for the remainder of the night. He said, "All right, we will see;" but in an unguarded moment I got up and left the chair. With one bound Hugh reached it and grasped it tight, while he exclaimed, with honest pride beaming all over his noble, honest face, at having outwitted us, "I have got it now, and I will keep it for ever and ever." Just then the alarm sounded, and noble, honest, manly, fearless, but God-fearing Hugh Scott, ten minutes after, along with his friend Edward Thompson, became a burnt, charred, shapeless mass of humanity.

When we arrived at the fire, which was only about three blocks from the engine house, dense black volumes of smoke were coming out of the third story windows. It did not take any longer time than I am taking to tell you to get to work. Spinning off the hose, breaking in the door, and ascending the stairs, I found a lot of straw on fire on the floor, but on looking up I discovered through a broken part of the hoist that a fierce fire was raging in the story above. Chief Bertram had arrived by this time, and I said to him, we must find the other stairway. So we both went to the back of

the building for that purpose, but failed to find any. I then said, we must go out of the building and try by another way to find the entrance to the third flat. The store had been altered, and the third flat rented to a wholesale boot and shoe maker, who occupied next door, and that accounted for us not being able to find any stairs on the flat we were on. Well was it for Chief Bertram, myself and others, that it was so; for, if we had found a stairway there, we would, like the other two, Thompson and Scott, have been hurled into eternity. As it was, we were very near it. On my way out to find the entrance to the third flat, I passed Scott, with branch in hand, and Thompson holding on to the hose behind him. I directed Scott to throw his water up through the hole in the hoist, and remain there until I found a better position for him. He said, "All right." Those were the last words that passed between us. Chief Bertram had by this time got half way down the stairs, and I had got down two or three steps. Dixon, the assistant branchman, was standing with one foot on the floor and the other on the top step, when a terrible explosion took place, sending those of us who were on the stairs to the bottom, and hurling us into the street. I picked myself up a little stunned, and the first person I saw was Dixon with his hair on fire. He said, "My God, boss, Scott and Thompson are in there!" I made a rush

for the stairs, but by this time the flames were bursting out of every door and window. The hose had been snapped off like a pipe shank, and the branch had gone down with poor Scott. I jumped into the street, called to "cut off the water," to bring another length of hose and another branch, intending to try and rescue my ill-fated comrades; but, alas, it was fruitless, they must have been killed instantly. At this time another scene was going on in this drama, which will show (although in a very small degree) the many trials undergone by firemen's wives. My wife had, with some friends that were at the house, come down to see the fire, and had just arrived at the hydrant, and was about to make a remark to the man on duty there, when the explosion took place. She caught her breath, well knowing from experience that some one had gone down under the floors, and who so likely as her husband. She knew that my place was directing the branch, and when some one ran up to the hydrant man and said two or three men were in the building, she became sick at heart, and no wonder, but when the same party said that all of No. 2 men were there, Scott, Dixon, McRobie and another one, she reeled, and would have fallen, had she not been caught by those standing around. It was at that moment that I recovered my senses, and called out to "shut off" the water. She heard my

voice, knew that I was not dead, and "thank God" was all she could say. She has often told me that many times after that, when she has visited large fires, and seen the roaring flames, the dense, black smoke, and heard the crashing timbers and the falling walls, she has lived that night and those few moments over again; and later on, when she has watched from her bedroom window the lurid glare lighting up the church steeples, and heard the shouts of the crowd and the screams of some poor unfortunate perishing in the flames, she would draw her little ones around her, while her heart was all but still, and her voice could scarce utter the words, "Pray for your father, darlings." Little do thousands of our citizens know, when wrapt in peaceful slumber, and little do we think, when we are combating the fiery fiend, surrounded by danger and excitement, that those dear ones in their solitary homes are undergoing a terrible agony of suspense and terror, far worse than death; and when, mayhap, it be that you are brought home by your comrades and carried into your humble home, look at the agonized face of that noble woman, with her little ones clinging around her, as she parts her lips and whispers, "Is he dead?" God bless and protect those noble women! Page after page could be written on the scenes that occurred at this fire, but one in particular was most heartrending.

Poor Mr. Thompson seemed to have some presentiment that all was not right, and after waiting a considerable time he made his way to the fire, and arrived just as we had commenced searching for the bodies. He was not kept long in suspense as to the true state of affairs, as the whisperings of the crowd disclosed to him the terrible news that Ned, his only and beloved son, was a charred corpse in the burning building. His expression of agony was heartrending. Poor old man, he caught sight of me, and rushing up took hold of me and exclaimed: "Where is my son? Where is my Neddie? Give me back my boy—he is not dead—he is not there!" pointing to the burning building. I tried to speak to him; I tried to tell him it was all right, it might not be he; but words utterly failed me. It seemed as if the old man was accusing me of his death, as if I had no right to allow him to go into the building and risk his life; and later on, at the coroner's inquest, when I was under examination, with the words of the old man still ringing in my ears, I was asked if it was not a fact that I was too venturesome, and not only too often risked my own life, but that I risked the lives of the men under me. I was very much downcast at the time, and felt the cruel words cut me like a knife. I replied warmly that I knew my duty; that I knew the dangers I would have to undergo when I accepted the posi-

meet at the corner of Craig and St. Lawrence streets. Scott's came first, the coffin placed on two hose reels, and drawn by forty old volunteers, supported on each side by a detachment of police; then came friends, members of the permanent Brigade in full dress uniform, Caledonia and other societies of which deceased was a member. Then came the body of Thompson, mounted on a gun carriage drawn by four horses, firing party in front, supported by police, friends, the Prince of Wales Rifles, of which the deceased was an officer, the Masonic fraternity, in full regalia, then followed thousands of citizens, the footpaths being taken up with women and children, the line of march being literally blocked up, and all traffic stopped. Arrived at Mount Royal Cemetery the two coffins were placed side by side, the firing party doing duty, and giving the last rites to officer and private as they lay side by side, Scott also receiving the rites of a soldier's burial, he being a member of the Montreal Engineer Corps. Thus two noble young men passed away, but their friends had the consolation of knowing that they died the death of the brave, with their faces to the enemy; and should you visit Mount Royal Cemetery, close by the firemen's monument, you will see a neat marble column broken at the top, with a suitable inscription thereon, erected by the citizens, and on each side of the grave a rustic chair, where could often

be seen an old careworn man and white-haired, noble-looking woman sitting with bent figures over the last resting place of their only and well-beloved son, of whom it can be said, "He is not dead, but gone before."

ST. PAUL STREET FIRE.

FIRE IN MRS. BEAUCHAMP'S BOARDING HOUSE—TWO LIVES LOST—AMUSING INCIDENTS — A SCENE IN A DEAD-HOUSE.

A fire which happened in the east end of St. Paul street, where a man and woman lost their lives, is worthy of note. I do so for the purpose of showing how a man may be as brave as the bravest, fearing no living man, still quite a coward when placed before a dead one. On this occasion the fire occurred in a boarding house, and when we arrived on the spot we were told that there were people in the building. We went at once to work to rescue them ; but, as is usually the case, they were dead before we arrived, but we were not long in finding them ; the woman was found first, pretty badly burned ; we then commenced a search for any others that might be still in the building ; two or three of us had entered one of those low attic rooms containing three or four beds. Our torch showed a very poor light, and the room was suffocating, the perspiration running down our faces. This was the only room remaining to be searched. I felt a little fatigued, and while the others were looking around the room and under

the beds, I sat down on one of the beds to rest myself, when I discovered that there was some one else on the bed. Thinking that it was one of the men of the Brigade, I said to him, "I guess they have all got out;" but receiving no answer I turned around to the person and spoke again. Still receiving no answer, I called one of the men to bring a torch, and, holding it over the bed, we discovered a man, half sitting, half lying, with his head resting on the top of the bed. He was quite warm, and looked as if he was only asleep. He was asleep, but it was the sleep of death. However, we thought there might be life in him, and while I sent for some brandy, we used the usual means to restore animation. We pressed open his mouth and passed a little brandy and water down his throat, but it was of no use; he was past all human aid. The man referred to in the beginning could not be induced to enter the house, when he heard that there were people burned in it. I did not press him to assist in removing the woman, as she was a poor old creature, and was not very heavy; but the man had been strong, robust and heavy, and was a story higher up than the woman; the stairs were very narrow, and it took all the help we could get. I went to the window, and calling him up, told him to take hold of the body. He made a dart for the stairs. I called him back, and told him he ought to be ashamed of

himself for showing such cowardice, that the man was not dead, and if he was he would not hurt him. At last he took hold of the body by the arm, but when we commenced to remove him, he opened his mouth, and a gurgling sound came up his throat (caused no doubt by reaction and wind on the stomach). "O ye gods and little fishes!" to see the "Brave Abe," as he was called, drop that lump of clay, and make for the stairs, shouting "Murder! the man is alive." Solemn as the surroundings were, and although we were in the presence of death, we could not resist the temptation to laugh, and throwing ourselves on the unoccupied beds, we sent up a chorus of roars that were almost enough to raise the roof off the building. Later on we removed the remains in a shell to the dead-house, which was in a lonesome locality, and in a dark, old building swarming with rats. After we had placed the body on top of some others that were there, and were coming out, I perceived our bold "Abe" standing on the footpath, for nothing in the world would tempt or induce him to enter the building. It was in the winter, the snow was very deep in the narrow street, and the entrance to the dead-house was considerably lower than the footpath, and there was "Abe" standing with his hands shoved deep down in his coat pockets. I stood in the doorway surveying his noble figure, when, on the impulse of

the moment, I grasped him by the coat and swung him into the dwelling of the dead, and shut the door. He never stopped until he fell heels over head over the coffins, and the roars that came from that house of death were enough to wake the dead. We let him out at once, and he rushed past us, never looking behind until he reached the engine house. When we arrived home and saw the pitiful object sitting at the stove, with his head bowed in his hands, I felt sorry for what I had done, and I have often thought since, that although meant as a joke, it might have turned out a serious one. "Abe," however, lived through it all; but as long as he remained in the Brigade he could never be induced to enter a building when anyone was burnt or suffocated; and if you wanted to get rid of him, all you had to do was to place your mouth to his ear and whisper, "There is some one dead in there," and Abe would quietly, but with long strides, remove his precious person to a safe distance, and from behind a hose-reel, hook-and-ladder carriage, or lamp-post, would watch the progress of the work of removing the dead. If it was only a joke got up at his expense, he would take it all in good part. He could bear anything but being brought face to face with the charred remains of the many victims who fall a prey to the devouring flames.

THE NORDHEIMER HALL FIRE.

NARROW ESCAPE FROM DEATH—IN THE HOSPITAL —AN AMUSING SCENE IN THE RECORDER'S COURT.

This fire occurred on a cold stormy night in the month of December, 1867, and was one of those fires that are very trying to the firemen's constitutions—that is, half roasted and whole smoked while the fire is in progress, and chilled through and through and half frozen after it is over. It is not my intention to go into the whole account of this fire; my only reason for introducing it is to place on record a few remarkable scenes which occurred that night to show what a man can endure, and, at the same time, to show how a man who has been low down in dissipation, can, by a strong, manly will, perseverance and God's help, place himself once more among his fellowmen in his right position.

The fire was a very severe one, having got full control of the building before the arrival of the Brigade. I took up my position first in the rear of the hall on Fortification Lane, and, directing my stream into one of the windows and leaving it in charge of two of the men, went round to the front

of the building, on St. James street, to see how things looked in that direction. When I entered the building I became convinced that unless two or three streams were brought into the front the whole building was doomed. Not having much hose laid in the rear (as the hydrant was very close), with the assistance of two or three young men I laid a second stream and took up a position at a small door leading into the hall. I left the stream in charge of these young men and went out to take a look at the rear; as soon as I saw the extent of the fire I was satisfied that nothing would save the hall—that is the main hall—but there were a good many other smaller places connected with it, such as Mr. Brand's billiard rooms and bar, and the large piano warehouse of Messrs. Nordheimer to save. At one time I would not have given much for the whole surrounding property, but with the good hard fighting of the Brigade, and the solid and massive walls surrounding the hall, the fire was confined to the building where it originated. But although confined to the hall, it was at the cost of some severe injuries received by members of the Brigade. When the roof fell in, it came very nearly killing a number of the men; as it was, some of them received some pretty hard knocks, amongst them my branchman Dixon, and my old and firm friend J. J. Cairns, a solid man of large understandings, and one of the best men in the

Brigade, a tried man of many years' standing and well entitled to be allowed to retire on a comfortable allowance, or as they call it in the Civil Service to be superannuated, but as he belongs to the uncivil service, I suppose there is no such boon in store for him, so he will just have to plod on like a good many others until he becomes unfit for duty, and then he will be cast off like an old horse. In fact, he will not get such a good chance; the old horse gets an extra feed of oats, and an extra rub down to make him sell better. Oh, Mr. Alderman, do go to work and have a by-law passed providing for those who get injured in the service of the city! the citizens are calling for it, and when the rate-payers are willing to stand the tax, why should such an important matter be delayed? It is not a new thing. Aside from the pensions given to the United States firemen according to their rank, let us come nearer home. Look at that hale, hearty-looking old gentleman, with the white hair, walking along at a smart pace. Who is he? That is Mr. So-and-so. What does he do? He does nothing now, he was in the Department of the Interior, I think, or in the east end of the Customs House, but he got tired sitting in a chair, or the Government thought fit to pension him off and send him to the country for the good of his health. Do not get angry, reader; I know that I am wandering away from the subject, but it galls me to think that

the money of the people is squandered away in so many useless ways, while men who have been maimed in the city's service are going about mending chairs for a living. Make enquires, ye spirited and independent citizens; ask a few questions at the proper quarters, and from those who are not afraid to answer them, and, *note them down!* After the fall of the roof, it was pretty lively for a while, but the Brigade at last conquered, and the only thing remaining to be done was to pour water into the rooms below, for when the roof fell in it carried the floors with it, down into the piano store below. It was while pouring water into the fiery furnace below that the principal scene took place. It was necessary to pass through the bar belonging to the billiard room, so that the champagne was flying about pretty freely, and some of the boys, fancying themselves at the Governor General's at home, or in the pantry or what else you will call it, got pretty funny, and, as the sequel will show, rather top heavy. As soon as I found out what was going on, I managed to get the bar so fastened up that they could not get at it; some of them grumbled a good deal, and said that we might as well drink it as have it burned; I told them "no," not while the fire was burning, but as soon as the danger was over, I would give them a good treat. I then placed one of them at the branch, named Tom Hogan, at present one of the most re-

spected and efficient members of the Brigade, but then one of the worst "scallywags" in the city. I know Tom will forgive me, I have been there myself. I told him to play right down on the red hot debris in the piano store, and I went to take another turn round. I came back in a short time, and found Tom sitting down with the branch out of his hands. I placed it under a half burned beam so that the water would strike down into the store below, where there was still a strong fire smouldering, and off I went again. I returned in a short time and found the stream just as I had left it, but no Tom. I looked round, but not seeing him, I thought he had gone off to some other part of the building; I was passing out through another door when I heard my name called by some one in an agitated manner. I at once ran back and met one of the young men who had been helping me all night; he seemed in a great flurry, and pointing to the doorway where the branch was placed, said, "That poor fellow has fallen down there." I tell you that brought me up, seeing poor, brave Tom roasting down there. It was impossible to get down by the way he had fallen unless to be roasted also, so I went up to the door, and looking down called out, "Tom, Tom, my boy, where are you?" but got no answer. I then placed the branch in such a position that it would play directly on him and give him a chance, although, to all appearances,

his chances were small by this time; quite a number of the Brigade and others had gathered round, and we went to work to find out where poor Tom had gone, although we had little hopes of finding him alive. We passed down stairs by the front and around through the music store, and got in behind, and after a good deal of trouble succeeded in forcing our way to the place where our unfortunate Tom ought to be. But what with the heat, the heavy beams, and the smoke it was some time before we found him. At last we came across him, lying in a corner, all in a heap; I went up to him and, taking hold of him, asked him if he was much hurt, but received no answer. I ordered some of the men to get a door or shutter on which to place him, and, as there were plenty of them lying round, we set to work to get him taken out. I urged those that were removing him to be easy and handle him gently, as I was under the impression that his legs were broken. With the greatest of care we lifted him on to the shutter, and conveyed him over the burnt timbers out into the street: he seemed quite unconscious all the while. We placed him in a sleigh and covered him up. I requested a policeman to accompany him to the hospital; so off went the policeman with poor Tom, maimed and bruised, as we expected, and, perhaps, dead. By this time the fire was pretty nearly over, and shortly afterward we commenced

to pack up, and were about starting for home when the policeman, who had gone with Tom to the hospital, came up. I asked him what was the extent of his injuries, or if he was dead. He replied, "Yes, dead, but dead drunk." At first I did not understand him, but at last he led me to understand that while on his way to the hospital, Tom woke up and, seeing the brass buttons, made straight for the bobby, and they had it rough and tumble in the sleigh until the carter had to help him to keep Tom down. At last they arrived at the hospital, and whether it was that Tom had become weak again or whether he thought that if he kept quiet and pretended bad, they might give him a little stimulant, he allowed himself to be carried into the hospital. After the doctor had examined him and found no bones broken, he quietly hinted that he thought he was in liquor. Tom, seeing his chances of getting any stimulant small, let out on the doctor and the policeman, and became so unruly that they had to bundle him into the sleigh again and take him to the police station. When I heard this, I became very angry, and was going right off to the hospital to see about it, but the policeman told me that it would be no use, as everything he told me was the truth, and knowing the policeman to be a very reliable man, I took his word and off we started home to the engine house, the policeman accompanying us. As soon as I had changed, my clothes

I went over to the station for the purpose of bailing Tom out, but the sergeant on duty said that he had gone to sleep, and it was better to let him stay there until morning, and then come over and lay the case before the Recorder; no doubt he would deal mildly with him. So, taking everything into consideration I thought it was the best thing I could, and off I trudged home, a tired man. Next morning, according to agreement, I went to the police station and had an interview with my friend Tom. He told me he did not remember anything of what had occurred the night before, and when I told him what had happened, and that he had taken too much of Brand's champagne, he looked at me in a most melancholy manner, and while a tear trickled down his cheek, he whispered, "Billy, my boy, there would not be a little drop of what I had too much of last night left, would there?" "No." "Ah well! never mind, as soon as I get out, I guess I have a friend or two left yet." I tried to get the sergeant to withdraw the charge against Tom, but it was no go; Tom had been a terror to the police, and more than once Doctor Picault, of medicine, and Doctor Patton, of cloth, had been called in to make repairs, but the policeman that conveyed him to the station promised to make things as light as possible. So the "Oyez, Oyez," having been pronounced, and the high dignataries of the supreme Recorder's Court having

taken their places, the first name called was Thomas Hogan. The Clerk of the Court stood up, wiped his glasses, took a clean rag out of his pocket, shook it out of its folds, and admired its beauty. Returning it to his pocket he thundered forth, "Thomas Hogan, you are accused of being drunk and disorderly and assaulting the police; what have you to say to the charge, *Guilty or Not Guilty?*" Tom straightened himself up and looked straight at the Court—for Tom in his worst times was outspoken and manly. I say Tom looked straight at the Court and said, "What did your Honor say?" The clerk, with a full flushed face, shouted out again, "You are accused of being drunk and disorderly and assaulting the police, what do you say to that?" "What do I say," shouted back Tom, "is it what I have to say you want; what have I to say, is it? Sure what is the use of me saying anything. You wouldn't believe me, and if you say I was drunk and whatever else you like, it is not for the likes of me to contradict you; if you say I was drunk I suppose I was, so go on with the play." (Tom was a first-class theatrical performer). The clerk wished the prisoner at the bar to know that he had not said he was drunk, but the policeman's charge on the sheet. "Well, well," said Tom, "it is all the same thing, if the policeman said I was drunk last night he has got to swear to it this morning, or his prospects of promotion are

very poor." The policeman took the stand and after being duly sworn, he gave his evidence in a straightforward manner, and in such a way as to put Tom's case not in so bad a light as it appeared on the sheet. While he was giving his evidence my name was brought into the case, and after he was done I felt that poor Tom was in for it, for although the policeman had given his evidence very much in favor of Tom, and explained how he worked at the fire, still that charge of assaulting the police was against him. On account of my name being mixed in the matter, His Honor the Recorder asked me if I had anything to say. I stepped up and thanked His Honor for allowing me an opportunity of giving my testimony in favor of the prisoner. Then rolling up my coat sleeves and giving a couple of "hems," I let out in first-class style on behalf of my client, going over the whole case from beginning to end, the great service he had rendered at the fire, his tumble into the flat below, and narrow escape from death, which I declared could only have been accomplished by an Irishman (that was one for Mr. Sexton). I asked permission from His Honor to briefly look over the charge against the prisoner. The indictment contained three distinct charges, viz., drunk, which I supposed meant intoxicated; disorderly, which I supposed meant singing "We won't go home till morning;" and assaulting the police: well, that has been

placed before the Court in so many different forms that it is hard to say what is meant by it. It might be asking a policeman who is his tailor, or "what time of day it is in English," or "does he think Vennor is always right in his weather predictions." Be that as it may, I declared to His Honor that there was not a particle of evidence to show that the prisoner at the bar was guilty of either or any of the charges in the indictment. In the first place he was accused of being intoxicated; "well, intoxication had a wide meaning, it is unnecessary for me to point out to Your Honor how many ways a person may become intoxicated. For instance, you can become intoxicated with joy; just picture yourself when you arrived home with the intelligence that your pay had been increased five hundred dollars; just think of the antics you kicked up! You dare not have done so in presence of the police or you would have been arrested for drunkenness. As for the word disorderly, it was only thrown in to make things look more desperate, and again, it is a fact that people become intoxicated with smoke. I have seen members of the Fire Brigade being brought out of a fire looking for all the world like a drunken man, and it has taken us quite a while to revive them, and I have seen them in just such condition as the policeman has sworn to. And again, how often has a small boy who has never touched anything stronger

than spruce beer, with his head leaning up against a fence, parting with his last molasses cake, and when some kind Samaritan walks up and taps him on the shoulder, and asks him in the kindest manner possible, what is the matter, Sonny looks up at the kind enquirer, with the tears running down his cheeks, but he cannot speak, his mouth is too full; he holds up his right hand, and from between his thumb and forefinger protrudes the butt of a cigar. I could illustrate many more instances where a person can be intoxicated without the use of spirituous liquor, therefore I claim, Your Honor, that there is not a particle of evidence to show that the prisoner at the bar was intoxicated with spirituous liquors, and in the third and last charge, Your Honor, that of assaulting the police, there is nothing to show that the prisoner is guilty of the offence. The policeman, in his evidence, testifies that the prisoner as soon as he saw his buttons made at them. Now I claim, Your Honor, that the buttons is not the man. Certainly, wherever you see the buttons it is supposed there is a man behind them, but you have to look pretty close sometimes to find him, but, be that as it may, Your Honor, I claim that there has been no evidence to show why the prisoner should not be discharged, but allowing, Your Honor, that there was a doubt in your mind on the matter, I know you are too kind of heart not to give the prisoner the full

benefit of the doubt. At this stage of the proceedings, I went into a long account of the heroism of the prisoner at the bar, and winding up with, Just think, Your Honor, of the anxiety of the prisoner's wife and prattling little ones. (Tom was not married then). Just think, Your Honor, of that poor woman in her lonely home sitting waiting and watching for her darling Tom, but no Tom comes, or perhaps, Your Honor, the news has gone around town that poor Tom is still in the ruins. Tom had, by this time, got into a splendid attitude of humiliation. The Recorder, looking up at Tom, and brushing away a tear from his cheek, and forgetting all about the charges lodged against Tom, addressed him in the most complimentary terms, dwelling on his noble and generous nature in giving his services to the city gratuitously, and lauding him to the skies for his heroism, and intimating that if he had it in his power he would reward him with the Victoria Cross or some other emblem of bravery. So bidding Tom good morning and to (not) call again, he dismissed the Court and all the other prisoners. While Tom stepped down out of the prisoner's box, and out of the back way into Jacques Cartier Square, I stepped out the front way and met Tom, and after "smiling" to one another, Tom took me by the hand and said, "You are a brick, Billy, you are losing your time in the Fire Brigade; let us go into partnership in

the show business." I thanked Tom, and telling him I would think over the matter, we shook hands, said good-bye, and each went his own way, well pleased with the last act of the Nordheimer Hall fire.

CARO FIRE, FEBRUARY, 1871.

WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THRILLING AND HEART-RENDING SCENES—A FACE AT THE WINDOW—AN AGONIZING APPEAL FROM A FATHER—THREE LIVES LOST.

At this fire, more than the usual excitement at fires occurred, on account of the sad events which took place. This was one of the fires which require all a man's presence of mind and daring, and was almost enough to demoralize and unfit him for duty; but as a fireman must on all occasions carry his life in his hands, so must he be likewise deaf to everything around him but stern duty. Midnight had just sounded on the time bells of the city on a cold February night in 1871, when another sound of a more dismal and dreaded nature broke the stillness—that dreaded sound, "Fire." Even the most drowsy and sleepy head will consent to turn and listen to the thundering of the different fire apparatuses as they hasten to the scene of action, like the flying artillery of the present day, but unlike them in this, that while the latter are hurrying on to deal death and destruction all around, the first are hastening to save from death and destruction at their own risk.

On this occasion we were called to the store and dwelling, 264 Notre Dame street. As we rounded the corner of the Court House square into Notre Dame street, we had no need to enquire where the fire was, for the street was lit up as if it had been noonday, and we were reminded that we were wanted there as soon as possible by some of the most heartrending shrieks it has ever been my lot to hear, and I don't know that I can do better than simply record a portion of that night's scenes as they were reported in the press: "Twelve o'clock had but just sounded on Saturday night, and the relief from the Central Station were betaking themselves to their beats, when three constables going down Notre Dame street perceived fire on the ground flat of a large building on the left hand side of the way, which is divided into small shops. Scarcely had one of the three rushed off to give the alarm at No. 2 Fire Station when the flames burst out of a window on the first flat, and almost simultaneously another window was thrown open, and two women in their night dresses appeared at it, making gestures of agonized supplication, one of them bearing a child in her arms. The poor, frightened creatures shrieked for help, and such power did their fright lend to their voices that their piercing cries were heard through closed doors and through doubly-shuttered windows far away down

the street. Constable Barrete, who, at a glance, appreciated the situation—a roaring fire below, a stairway in flames above; no escape but through a window, and that one some fifteen feet from the ground—hailed a passing sleigh, bade the driver draw up beneath the open casement, and, standing on the improvised fire escape, shouted to the people above to hand down the children. Down they came—a man having taken the place of one of the women—first an infant eight months old, then a curly-headed boy of three, a little girl of five, and her sister, nine years of age; then one of the women, closely followed by the other. The fire in the meanwhile made its way into the room, and as the man swung himself down, the flames seemed almost to follow him. It has taken some time to tell all this, but the time in which it was done was incredibly short, certainly not more than a minute. Yet, short as it was, the flames had made such progress as to burst out through the window in the second flat, and as No. 2 reel came flying down the street, while the last woman was being let down from the window, a great rush of fire spurted half way across the street, retreating and advancing, and licking up the air already intensely heated. A couple of seconds sufficed for the active men of No. 2 Station to attach their hose to a hydrant, and pour a stream into the shop. The door had previously been

broken open, and the whole interior was glowing like a furnace, but before the room was well damped there came a dreadful cry of agony from without: 'For God's sake save my boy.' The men turned their attention in another direction; they ran out and learned from Mr. Caro, the man who had just escaped from the burning building, that his eldest son, a boy of 13, was still in the building along with his brother Henry, aged 40, and the servant girl, Fanny Burgess, aged 23." I will here introduce a scene which was not mentioned by the press. We had extinguished the flames in the shop when a person in the street called out to me, "For God's sake come here quick." As I ran into the street he pointed up to the window and said, "Look there." I looked up, and there stood a girl on the third flat with her face pressed close to the window. She stood there only for a moment or two, when she fell backward, and disappeared from our view. I never saw such an agonizing look in all my life. I stood spell bound, but only for a moment. I knew that the ladders could not be on hand for at least five minutes yet, and the only way to reach that poor creature was through the flames that had reached the second story. I jumped into the building again, called on the men that if ever they had proved themselves worthy of the name of firemen, to do so now, that there was a girl in the third story; and

never did men obey a call with more pluck and determination. Regardless of self we mounted the stairs, driving back the flames as we went, but a fierce blast would occasionally descend, completely enveloping us, singeing our hair and scorching our faces. The water that went out of the branch pipe on that February morning, cold as ice, came pouring back on us boiling hot. Still we fought our way inch by inch, step by step, until we reached the room above on the second flat, and there, after a short, sharp struggle the battle was over, and the victory won. But at what a sacrifice! After the fire was extinguished it became quite dark, and we had to grope our way to the third flat, and it was no easy matter, as the rooms and stairs in those old buildings were very complicated, the stairs not following in rotation, as is the case in more modern buildings.

I will now resume the account as given by the press. "Branchman Cairns called out to McRobie, 'What is this?' McRobie groped his way to where he heard Cairns voice, and, putting his hand down, said, 'What is this? Bring a torch.' A torch was quickly brought, and there lay a revolting sight—a dead man. Little use saying who he was; he may have had an individuality half an hour ago, now he is indistinguishable from the veriest clod that is in the fresh ploughed field. Turn up his face. Pah!

This is no face, a mass of charcoal. This God's image? Black, shapeless, meaningless, turn it back in the name of its maker, whose spirit has departed it!" And as it falls to its old position, see the broad red surface where the skin has been scorched away from the flesh of the back, the garments having been burned entirely from the upper part of the body, only a vestige of clothing still hangs on the lower limbs, the trowsers are but a mass of tinder, but the woollen drawers remain intact. He lies as he drew himself up in the last sick pangs, huddled together, his hands drawn in and terribly burned, his toes contracted, and his limbs and body drawn together in convulsive movement. "Carry him down, carry *it* down, rather;" one of the strong firemen turns faint and sick as he tries to lift the ghastly mass, that lately contained a living soul, and is obliged to leave. Down with it to the street, however, by more callous or more practised hands. And now leaving the poor helpless dead to be cared for by other hands, up stairs go the firemen, the charred planks crunching beneath their feet. No boy is to be found, however; there is a tossed bed in one corner of the room, but it is empty, the boy must have escaped. Stay! here is another door; open it; bring a torch! the men speak with bated breath. What is this? Something that looks white in contrast with the general blackness of the room—an-

much as they could do to steady their nerves to perform their unenviable task. As for the young hands, with but few exceptions, they could not be prevailed on to come near; some of them utterly broke down. I don't think I have ever seen a father take it so badly as did the father of the boy. While we tried all we could to keep the parents back, it was not easily done, and a man who can keep back a father or mother, on such occasions, must have a very hard heart, for great must be the love of parent for child, when standing gazing (as I have often seen them) on the charred remains, where there was not one feature recognizable, or nothing remaining about them that could tell them that there lay all that was left of their dearly beloved.

Rather a strange incident occurred at this fire. My branchman, Nat Cairns, and myself were making a thorough examination of the building, as is the duty of the company located nearest the fire. We were prowling around, turning over this thing and the other thing, to see if there was any more fire smouldering about the premises, previous to packing up and going home—and let me tell you, I consider this one of the hardest parts of a fireman's duty, and the most trying on his constitution on a cold night. What with the tremendous strain on his nerves at the outset of the fire, his clothes being saturated through with water, and the fire having died out, not only in the building but in himself, he be-

comes a cold, drawn-up, miserable-looking object, as much like the dashing fellow you saw an hour or two ago, rushing, as it were, into the very jaws of death, as a hen on a cold frosty morning with its leg drawn up under its feathers. Well, as I said, we were prowling about when we heard a most piteous wail which startled us, and, although not easily frightened, we looked at one another, as we stood in that lonely house of death, and, I must confess, that a slight tremor came over me, but it did not last long, and whether it was the screams of the women still ringing in my ears, and the piteous cries of the little ones that had been rescued on our arrival, I don't know, but I thought it was the wail of a child. It was again repeated, the sound coming from a back room. I said, "Good gracious, Nat, that is a child; how in heaven could it have lived all through this fire and smoke?" We proceeded toward the room, our torch burning but dimly, the wail still continuing, oftener as we approached. At last we discovered a sofa in the corner, and the wailing coming from under it. I passed the torch to my comrade, and lay down flat reaching under the sofa, and grasping something, pulled it out, and held up to the light a splendid specimen of a cat—one of those animals which are supposed to have nine lives. I took it home and cared for it, and it was not the first nor the last of those domestic animals, the old maid's friends, that I have rescued.

BLACK CHARLEY.

A NOBLE ANIMAL — SAGACITY OF A HORSE — STRANGE ANTIPATHY TO POLICEMEN—A TASTE FOR LOBSTERS AND APPLES—HOW A HORSE BECAME A TEMPERANCE LECTURER.

Little need be said in introducing to my readers that noble animal the horse. I will therefore give as briefly as possibly a short detail of the 'cute little black "Charley," who did duty in the Fire Department for over eleven years. If Charley could love, he could also hate, and if you once played a shabby trick on him he would never forget it, and it was easily found out if any of the men abused him when out, as he was sure to take his revenge when he got home. This he would do in different ways; but one of his pet methods of revenge was, when he would get the man in the stall, he would throw himself against him, hold him fast, and squeeze him until he was red in the face, and he seldom stopped until someone went to the relief of the unfortunate. This he knew he could do with impunity, as the other men would not allow him to be punished for it, and as the victim was generally a new hand, he did not know the little tricks of Charley. The Brigade did the street watering at this time, and the horse had

to change hands very often. There was one man who was determined to break him of his tricks, and more than once he suffered for his ill-usage of that noble little animal, and things went so far that he dare not go near him in the stall. I at last cautioned him that if they could not agree better I would have to part with one of them, and I did not think it would be my little pet. But it was no use, it went from bad to worse; the work was not half done the days this man went out, two days a week. At last it came to an end. Charley had his regular rounds to go, and knew them as well as the men did, and if left alone would go his rounds in quick time; but this man was bound to take the conceit out of Charley, and Charley was as equally determined he should not; so at last Charley struck work right in the middle of the street, and budge he would not. The City Passenger cars came along, and the conductor called out to switch off, but no switch off for Charley. He had taken his stand, and was going to see it out. The usual crowd gathered, some taking him by the head, others licking him with the whip. The driver called out, "Get up, you stubborn brute!" Charley would look over his shoulder at his opponent and grin, as much as to say, "How is this, old boy? you can't fool Charley—not if he knows it." At last word came to the Station that something was wrong with

the horse in the street, so the three remaining men went to see what was the matter. We had a pretty fair idea of what was the matter, as it was not the first time they had had a set-to in the street. By this time two or three cars had met, and there were hundreds of spectators, some of them giving vent to their anger against the horse, those in the car complaining of the delay, while one or two of the legal fraternity, who carried their offices in their hats, called out, "A clear case of damages against the Corporation," at the same time handing their bits of pasteboard to those they thought had plenty of the needful. They say corporations have no souls, but from what I heard that day, I think it would be well for them if they had no ears. But it did not take long to put things to rights, and not liking to hear the abuse the Corporation was getting, far less my little favorite, I said, "Gentlemen, do not blame the horse; it is not his fault;" and telling the man to get down, another took his place, and as soon as he said "Get up, Charley," off he went, amidst the cheers of the crowd, for there were a good many present who knew the tricks of the little fellow.

Charley did not like the police. By the by, no one seems to like the police. How is this? I do not understand it. I have been intimate with the members of that force for over twenty years, and

have always found them a good lot of fellows, but the worst abused servants of the Corporation. Nevertheless, it is true, and the everyday cry is, "Where are the police?" and when they arrive to do their duty, they are not wanted. I think it is not so much the man as the everlasting buttons. Be that as it may, why Charlie hated the police I will never tell you, but that he did so the following narrative will show: I think about 1863 or 1864 there was a batch of new police taken on the force. Some of them were pretty green from the back country, Bord à Plouffe, Côte-à-Baron, and other outlandish places. It was our custom to turn Charley out loose on Sunday mornings, to sport about in the Court House square, and it did our hearts good to see the little fellow jump about, kick up his heels and run around. Well, the first Sunday morning after the new batch came on, Charley was out as usual sporting about; but no sooner did the boys in blue coats and brass buttons see him than a council of war was held, and whether it was the thought of at once distinguishing themselves, or the fifty cents received from the public pound, they resolved at once on his capture. They advanced in battle array, surrounding their unsuspecting victim, who was quietly nibbling the grass; but they had no sooner got near enough to Charley to capture him than he let fly at the nearest one, and turning around, set

back his ears, and rushed at them. Erecting his head and tail, he rushed snorting through the square. They tried it on two or three times, but as often failed. The sergeant and two or three of the old hands were standing in the police-station door enjoying the fun, and encouraging them. At last one of them discovered that he belonged to the fire station at the other end of the square; so, over he came, in all his pomp and authority, and demanded why we allowed our horse to go at large? did we not know it was against the law? At first I intended to give him a bit of my mind, and tell him the duty of a green policeman at the same time, but I took another thought, and told him we could not help it, but if he would give us a hand we would try to catch him; so, telling the other men to stand around to drive him into the station, the policeman and I went after the truant. Now, there were two or three things Charley did not like; he did not like to be licked with a whip; he did not like to go without his oats, and he detested more than anything else to be laughed or hissed at. If you put out your tongue at Charley, look out for breakers ahead. Well, on went the policeman and I, dodging through the trees, and when I thought we had got near enough, I told the policeman to go around him one way and I would go the other. The policeman sallied forth on his tip-toes, with his baton be-

hind his back, I all the time standing behind a tree watching my chance. As soon as he got near Charley I gave vent to a sharp hiss. Like lightning Charley up with his head, whirled around, saw the policeman, made for him, and the policeman made for the police station, with Charley after him, and as he reached the footpath Charley made a dart at the bobby, caught him by the coat tail, whirled around, and trotted back with a piece of the policeman's coat tail in his mouth. That policeman was mulcted to the tune of a little bill for one dollar, from Patton Bros., tailors in general to the police.

CHARLEY AS A TEMPERANCE LECTURER.

A very amusing incident occurred in the engine-house one night, which gave us any amount of mirth and fun for many a long day. There was a very clever and witty individual (nicknamed Casco), who used to frequent the engine-house, but he was one of those unfortunates who were given to drink; and although it was forbidden to harbor such characters (and the rules were very strict on that point), he was such a harmless and good-natured soul, that we strained a point and let him sleep on the oat-bin; and as we usually had a "snack" before going to bed, he always came in for his share. He used to say, in his dry off-hand manner, "Your eating and drinking are very good, but your sleeping

accommodation is very poor." Well, on this night we had lobsters, and we had broken them on the top of the oat-bin, or rather, on Casco's bed, as he called it; and after we were through the table-maid forgot to remove the cloth and wipe down the table, so that some of the shells and other matter remained on the top of the bin. Casco was out this night, and did not come in until late, and pretty full. The gas was lowered, and I had cautioned him if he would come in the worse of liquor, or make a noise, he would be put out. He came sneaking in as steady as his condition would permit him, and taking off his coat, folding it up and putting it under his head, prepared to take a good night's rest on his couch—not of down, but of lobster shells. But alas, "The best laid schemes o' mice an' men gang aft agley," and poor Casco had become restless in his slumbers and had turned over, the bits of shells and other matter of the lobsters adhering to his unmentionables. I said before that there were things Charley disliked, but there were things he did like, and one of these was lobsters. So, as Casco turned over, Charley smelt lobsters, and backing out of his stall (men and horses slept under the same roof, the horse always in harness, and as close to the reels as possible), he proceeded to investigate from whence came the smell. It did not take that 'cute animal long to dis-

cover the whereabouts of the lobsters, and he at once commenced to make an onslaught on them. After carefully picking off the loose pieces of shells, some of the other matter adhered so strongly to the seat of Casco's pants, that Charley had to use teeth force, and in doing so he turned Casco over, and down he came plump on the floor, with such a force that it woke him up. When he looked up and saw in the dim light the head and large eyes of the horse staring at him, he grasped his coat and ran out of the engine-house like a streak of lightning. It was a long time before he could be induced to enter the place again. I did not see him for some time after, and, on meeting him, I enquired what took him off in such a hurry that night. He looked very grave, and I could see there was something on his mind; still he looked brighter and not so dissipated, so I had ventured to ask him if he had given up drinking. He said, "Yes, and it is about time to give up drinking when the *evil one* comes along and tries to shake the life out of a fellow." I laughed, and tried to convince him that it was the horse that shook him up, but it was of no use. He maintained that it was one of Satan's imps that had visited him that night, and thus Charley, through his fondness for lobsters, became a temperance lecturer.

Charley was a very valuable horse to us at times, especially when we were hard up and wanted to

raise the wind. Young men are generally very fond of visiting fire stations, especially "toney" ones, and many a one has had to shell out at the demand of Charley. When one of these gentry would come in with a demand for information about fire matters, we would take stock of him at once, and lay ourselves out for him. We would place ourselves in such positions that when the time came the only place he could make for would be into the bunk-room. One of us would give a hiss, and that would be enough. Charley would wheel around on his hind legs, and make straight for our nobby friend, and if he tried to make for the door we would push him into the bunk-room, and shut the door, go outside, and set ourselves up against the Court House and roar, the clerks in the Prothonotary's Office joining in, knowing that another victim was in the lock up, and Charley was doing "sentry-go." Every time he would open the door to get out, Charley would make a dart at him. At last he would call out, "Let me out; take away this confounded brute," and other not very complimentary remarks, till at last we would return, and ask him what was the matter, what was he doing in there kicking up a row. At first he would try to bounce us, but finding that would not do, he would then try, "Like good fellows, do let me out," and so on. We told him we had nothing to say in the matter, it was all in

Charley's hands, or rather his mouth, whether he could get out or not. Charley had been so taught that by touching him on a certain spot he would nod his head, and by touching him on another spot, he would shake it. So, after the fellow had been kept in for some time, and had been piteously imploring to get out, one of us would go up to the door and open it just enough to let him see the horse's head, and we would tell him that we would ask the horse. One of us would say to Charley, taking care to touch him on the right spot, "Do you want some apples, Charley?"—nod of the head. "Have you any money to buy them?"—shake of the head. "Will you let this gentleman out if he gives you some money to buy apples, Charley?"—nod of the head. "Will twenty-five cents do, Charley?" shake of the head. "Will fifty cents do?"—nod of the head. The fifty cents are passed out, Charley marches off to his stall, and the gentleman wanting information on fire matters walks out. We bid him good day, and tell him to call again when he passes this way. Charley gets his apples, and we get—there goes the gong.

Charley was very fond of apples, and was a terror to the old apple women that congregated in the Court House Square. On holidays, Charley would be let out to get the fresh air, and, as soon as he showed himself, it was the signal for the old women to look sharp after their stock. Charley had some

cunning ways of outwitting the old women. He would nibble at the grass, gradually drawing nearer and nearer, until some wealthy individual would stop to invest a cent. That was Charley's chance, and making a dash at the stand, he was generally successful in carrying off two or three apples, and damaging as many more. Another little dodge of his was to trot up to the centre stand as if he was going to make a raid on it, the women, on each side of the centre stand, would muster and come to the assistance of their *confrères* in business, brandishing their sunshades and umbrellas. But at once, Charley would make for one of the end stalls, and sometimes do considerable damage. But it was so amusing, that there was always someone about, who had more money than sense, to pay the damages, which seldom amounted to more than ten or fifteen cents.

The boys and young men were very fond of Charley, and thought it quite a privilege to be allowed to bring him apples, and when Charley saw any of them coming, he would trot up to them for his apples. There was one young sport, in particular, who spent considerable money on him, and, on one occasion, we made him pay more than he bargained for. This happened at a fire on Notre Dame street, near St. Francois Xavier street. There was an old Irish woman, who kept quite an extensive

establishment on the corner, extending not less than ten or twelve feet along the curb-stone. After the fire had been extinguished, we commenced to pack up our hose, and, to do so, we had to take the horse out of the shafts. This young sport was standing by, and asked to be let hold the horse. I told him never to mind, he would not go away, but he wanted to take care of him so badly that I thought we might as well have some fun at his expense. So, I told him to take the horse out of our way. "Go over to the other side of the street, and call 'apples,' Charley." Charley no sooner heard apples, than he pricked up his ears, and started for the other side of the street. As soon as he discovered the magnificent display of ripe, tempting fruit, he licked his lips, and looked around as if to say, "Now this is what I call a sensible invitation; the young man who invited me to this feast can count me in as one of his best friends." So, he made a dash at the stand, and sent the fruit all over the street. The cries of that old Irish woman alarmed the neighborhood. She ran at Charley with a fly duster she had in her hand, but she might as well have tried to dust a fly off the north pole as to dust Charley away from that apple-stand. Oh, no! Charley had got a taste of the delicious fruit, and was not to be fooled. At last, one of the men had to take him away, but, at the same time, he pitched into the young man for not

taking better care of the horse and getting us into trouble. The young man said he could not help it, but he would settle with the old woman. After our hose was packed up, we started for home, and on looking back, I saw the old woman brandishing the fly duster around the young man's head, the young man with one hand up to defend himself, while the other was deep down in his breeches pocket, hunting up the needful to appease the old woman's wrath.

Charley was a great favorite with my wife, and knew her market days as well as she did. When he saw her go to the market, with her basket, he was sure to be on hand when she returned. If he could sneak out of the engine-house, he would trot to the other end of the square to meet her, and as soon as he saw her, he would run up to her. Sometimes she would pretend not to see him, but Charley would place himself in front of her, as much as to say, "Do not try that on with me, it is of no use." He would shove up the lid of the basket, and inspect its contents, and he generally found his apples on the top. It was nothing unusual for my wife to take an apple in her mouth, and show it to Charley. He would step up and take it out of her mouth as gently as a dove, and the two would march along together up to the engine-house door, and I have seen him follow her up two or three steps of the stairs. Charley was very mischievous and played a great many tricks on

the men. If they did not get up promptly in the morning to feed him, as they did not always do, especially on dark mornings or when they had been out all night at a fire, he would start around the station, turning things upside down, changing their boots, putting two rights and two lefts together, taking their coats and belts off the racks, and strewing them all around the house. Then he would go up to the bunk-room door, and take a look in, and make as much noise as possible, and when he failed to rouse them, he would go over to the reels, and taking the shank of the bell in his teeth, would swing it backward and forward, and make such a tremendous noise that some of them would have to get up and feed him. But everything had to come to an end, and so had poor old Charley, for he was getting old by this time, and it was found necessary to sell him. He did not survive his departure from the Brigade long. He succumbed to the indifferent treatment he received, inside of six months after he was sold, for very few of the horses live long after they leave the Department. So Charley died, aged seventeen years, having served the Corporation faithfully for over eleven years.

ST. JAMES HOTEL FIRE.—1873.

WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THRILLING SCENES AND HEROISM OF WOMEN—BRAVERY OF THE BRIGADE — THREE LIVES LOST—OTHERS FEARFULLY MANGLED—UP AMONGST THE FLAMES —NOBLE RESCUE OF A WOMAN—THE JURY'S VERDICT.

Again it becomes my unpleasant duty to record another most disastrous fire, where three lives were lost, three or four persons badly maimed, while a large number of the inmates had a narrow escape. This fire occurred in the St. James Hotel, facing on Victoria Square, on the eighteenth day of March, 1873, and I question if ever I was present at a fire where I saw such an amount of courage, daring and presence of mind shown by some of the inmates, or more determined fire fighting and heroism by the Fire Brigade. To give a description of every incident and accident that occurred on that eventful night is utterly impossible. I will, therefore, confine myself as nearly as possible to what came under my personal observation.

The fire was first discovered about one o'clock in the morning, and by some unaccountable manner the alarm was not sounded until it had gained

complete hold of a small building adjoining, and connected with the main building, used as kitchen-laundry and servant's sleeping apartments. In this building slept four female servants, three of whom escaped, but the fourth, named Mary Brennan, was burned to death. As soon as the alarm was sounded, the Brigade, as usual, were quickly on the spot, and the scenes that met our gaze, as we rounded into the square at full gallop, were something terrible to look at. The windows overlooking the square were filled with people, some calling for help, others throwing out their trunks, while others could be seen dangling in mid air, suspended by their bed clothes knotted together. But the confusion outside was nothing to what was going on inside. The rushing to and fro of the inmates interfered considerably with the actions of the Brigade. Some of the men were more or less injured, for after dodging numerous trunks and other such things outside, pitched from the third and fourth stories down into the street, inside you had to run the gauntlet of numerous Saratogas, which came tumbling down stairs. But such slight matters were soon forgotten for the more serious ones that were just then taking place in other parts of the building. News reached us that there were two women in great peril on the roof of the building where the fire originated, and part of the Brigade at once turned their attention to

them and not a moment too soon. They were two of the girls who had escaped from the building. The night was a cold one, and they had nothing on them but their night clothes—neither feet, hands nor head had any covering. Under the circumstances, I have seldom seen women, or even men, behave with such coolness and bravery; they were standing on the spout of the building with nothing to hold on by; thirty or forty feet from the ground, with the flames warring out of the window close alongside of them. They remained there a considerable time before ladders arrived and were placed in position. At last, the poor things were rescued and conveyed to the police station, where they were supplied with warm clothes by some kind citizens, for they had lost everything they owned. Shortly after this, and close by, another horrible scene took place. I had just entered the main entrance on Bonaventure street, after the girls had been taken away, when I heard a dull thud on the footpath behind me, but thinking that it was a trunk or something else that had been thrown from the windows, I was hastening on, when my assistant, Richard Choules (poor happy Dick, who lost his life at the St. Urbain street disaster), called out, "For God's sake, Captain, come here quickly." I ran back and to my horror found it was a human being, Mr. Hilditch, of Messrs. Evans, Mercer & Co., who had

jumped from the fourth story window, striking a number of telegraph wires in his descent, bounding back, and dropping on the hard stone footpath maimed and bleeding. He was picked up and conveyed to the Hospital, where he died next day. Mr. Hilditch was a remarkably clever young man, aged twenty-five years, and had only arrived a short time before from England to take charge of a particular branch in the wholesale drug business of the above firm, of which he was a partner. Mr. Hilditch had a great dread of fire, and seemed so impressed that something was going to happen, that the day before his death he was enquiring from some of the clerks in the establishment where he could get a quiet place in some private family as he would not stay another week in the hotel, he was so much afraid of fire. Although his presentiment proved but too true, little did he think, poor fellow, that death was so near. His death caused a good deal of comment at the time, and indignation meetings were held, at which some of the most prominent citizens took part, and in no measured terms condemned the niggardly policy of the Corporation in not providing the Fire Department with better fire escapes, which could be more easily handled and better manned (that is, having a full complement of men, not three or four where eight or ten are required). The proprietors of hotels also came in for a share of censure from

weight? If she made one false step, what then? Well, the three of them would be hurled into the street. While she was hesitating, those two noble fellows below in their perilous position were giving her words of comfort, and telling her not to be afraid, but to come down slowly, and take care not to miss her footing. She obeyed their directions, and passed down the fly ladder into Nolan's arms, who stood on the main ladder, and was carried to the ground. This was a feat I believe unparalleled in history, for while it may not appear much in my simple manner of describing it, let some of my female readers that have never descended a ladder before try to come out of the first story window on to one, and I feel safe in saying that nine out of ten will back out and not risk it. But when we take into consideration the fact that Miss O'Connor was eighty feet from the ground, and the top ladder very unsteady, she must have been a girl of remarkably strong nerves and undoubted courage. I repeat again, I do not believe the feat has ever been equalled.

But while this was taking place on the outside, stirring scenes were taking place inside. The fire was gaining on the Brigade, although they were working as I had seldom seen them work before. On hearing of the peril of the girl in the window, I ran upstairs just as they were raising up

into a room closing the door and fanlight behind her, and opening the windows, called for help. It was then that the crowd in the street gazed spellbound at the poor girl up at such a height, imploring for help, expecting to see her throw herself from the window. Some one called out to her to take courage, that there was a ladder coming, but alas! the ladder was too short; the room was becoming full of smoke and uncomfortably hot, and she called out she could not stand it much longer. At last she stepped deliberately out of the window, and turning around, placed her feet on a ledge of stone that was projecting out from the wall, and catching hold of the sill of the window, hung there for over twenty minutes, until she was rescued. (Was that not coolness and courage?) As stated before, the ladder was too short, so Beckingham ascended to the top, while Nolan passed up a shorter ladder to him; he then, by main strength, placed the butt against his feet, and stooping down, brought it end over, and placed the top towards the poor girl, but it was too short still; so he ascended until he reached the last rung, then placing his back against the wall, he braced himself, and raised the ladder until it touched her feet. What must have been the feelings of that poor girl at that time? Help so near, yet death perhaps nearer, should she trust herself on the ladder. Could the men hold on with her additional

and rushed into the room, only to find that we were too late, that the victory so hard fought for had been snatched from our grasp; but while we felt crest-fallen at it, we were manly enough to mingle our cheers with the plaudits of the hundreds that were rending the air with their shouts of applause as Johanna O'Connor and her two brave rescuers reached the ground.

I think it not out of place at this time to give a part of Miss O'Connor's experience on that eventful night, as related by herself:—"Last night, before I went to bed, the watchman and bookkeeper came up to the kitchen to ascertain where the great amount of smoke issued. They looked at the stove, and finding the fire all right, went down stairs again. There had been a great smoke in the house since Sunday, and two men had been at work repairing the flues; and although the smoke was dense, nobody seemed to have any fears of a fire. I remarked to the men I thought something was amiss, but went to bed after the visit of the night watchman and bookkeeper, and soon fell asleep. I was awakened by hearing the loud shouts of the night watchman, who yelled at the top of his voice, 'Girls, get up, the house is on fire.' Another girl slept with me, and she screamed out for me to get up, thinking I was still asleep. I got out of my bed, and went outside of my room door, but could not see

any light, and was nearly choked with smoke. Oh, it was stifling. I then ran back and put on the first clothes I could find, but did not fasten them, or put on my stockings. I ran out again to try and find the stairs, but could not, and every time I took a breath I thought I should choke; then I heard someone, a boarder, I think, shout out, 'Where are the stairs?' I then ran towards the voice, and by chance happened to catch hold of a man's coat; he said, 'Who has got a match?' I kept hold of his coat till we got to a door, opened it, and went in, finding the gas was lit, we all ran to the window, and one of the men smashed it and called out for help from the people below; just then the bed burst into a blaze, and first one man jumped out and then another. Then, seeing the whole room in a blaze, I let myself out of the window, clinging to its frame with my right hand, and hung in that way shouting for help. The room below me was on fire, and I shouted, 'Oh men! Oh men! help me! help me! and they were very kind and told me not to let go and they would help me. So I took fresh courage, but the fire got hot below me, and a gentleman called out to the firemen to throw water in that room until I was rescued, but somebody else took the stream to another part of the building. The people kept on saying, 'Don't let go, the ladder is coming;' but when it came it was too short, only

pluckily as did the men of the fire Brigade that night. The building was a very complicated one, and had been condemned for years, and well did the old and experienced firemen of the Brigade know it was either fight hard and gain the victory or stubbornly back down, save their lives, and let the building burn to the ground—the ruins to remain a monument of their defeat, a state of things most galling to a true and spirited fireman. And while they were conscious in their own hearts that they had done their duty, and while those that were present might testify to the many acts of heroism displayed that night, and to the general steadiness and good behavior of the Brigade, still there were those to be found who were malicious enough to spread abroad that the destruction of the hotel was due to all manner of conceivable mismanagement. While I honestly admit that there were wants of a serious nature in the handling of the Brigade that night, and that the howls of rage and condemnation of the vast multitude at the inadequate appliances placed in the hands of the Brigade were just and not unreasonable, I as emphatically deny that any part of that night's casualties could in the smallest degree be attributed to the men. On the contrary, the plaudits the men received from time to time, as streams were seen shooting out of windows away up in the top flats of that vast building, spoke

more than words of the fierce and determined struggle for victory going on away up there, amidst the smoke and flames. With such fearful scenes going on around me, I to a certain extent forgot my late appointment as Captain of the Salvage Corps, and threw in my lot with my old Company No. 2, and my old friend Nathaniel Cairns, of whom it can honestly be said, a truer friend or better fireman never lived. After the exciting scenes just referred to had passed, the next important work was the saving of the building, lives first, bricks and morter after, for I claim that no fire department is complete without a properly organized and separate life-saving corps, and I am sorry to have to write that some of the best organized brigades on this continent have fearfully overlooked this important branch of its equipment. This is another of my hobbies, but I have seen so much loss of life in the past twenty-seven years, that I cannot help expressing my feelings strongly on this matter, and have no hesitation in saying that the death rate might have been much less had even the ordinary appliances been placed in the hands of the Brigade.

I will again return to the fire. As I said before, I threw in my lot with No. 2, who were so nobly fighting their way up to the attics of the building. I had gone outside of the building two or three times for the purpose of taking a good look

at the progress of the fire, and at the chances the Brigade had of victory. On one occasion two gentlemen, who were in the crowd (one of them a city alderman) called my attention to the unsafe state of the building, and asked if I was aware that it was condemned. I told them I had been aware of the fact as far back as 1858 or 1859. They then asked me why we did not leave it, and not risk our lives? I answered, "It may be all right for you gentlemen to stand quietly looking on and suggest such matters, but you have yet to learn that a fireman loses all thought of danger in the heat and din." They replied, "That may be all very well, but men's lives ought not to be risked in such a reckless manner." Just then Chief Bertram came in sight and the alderman called him, and about the same conversation took place between them, the Chief telling him that there was no danger at present, but as soon as he thought there was any he would withdraw his men. Even this did not seem to satisfy them, so the Chief told me to go into the building, and take a good look around, and see how things were getting along. I knew that if Chief Bertram said there was no danger, I might rely on his word, for he was not only a brave and good fireman, but also a practical and cautious one, and so loved the men under his command that he would not allow even the semblance of danger to show itself, but would withdraw them.

Many of the old members of the force can recall to memory many of the bygone days, and the stern but cheery word of command of that old hero. And if Chief Bertram loved his men, *his men loved him in return*, and would go through fire and water for him (of course they were paid to do that), and some of them will also remember, when they became a little stubborn and slow in backing out when ordered, the gentle way the old gentleman would remark, "Did you hear me?" at the same time gently stroking your back with that little bit of hickory he used to carry. And I have to smile now when I think of the days long gone by, and the figures cut by a certain tall, loosely-thrown-together individual in the department, when that little switch descended on his back. But, if the Chief had sometimes to apply the rod, it was done in such a way that I have never seen a man resent it. I have seen it tried on by others, but they only tried it once, when they were quietly reminded not to try it again—the style was too awkward, and did not seem to take. But enough of this for the present; for, while it may be all plain talk to the members of the Brigade, and perfectly understood by them, I am afraid it will not only appear dry matter, but perfectly ridiculous to the uninitiated. I went up into the building where the men were fighting the fire. True, manly firemen are stubborn fire-fighters; and I will admit that for

once I thought the old veteran was astray. I groped my way up to the top of the building, following the line of hose which I knew belonged to No. 2, at the end of which I knew I might depend on finding as steady as a rock, my old branchman, Nathaniel Cairns, then guardian. When I reached within hailing distance, I called out, "How are you getting along, Nat?" He replied in his easy-going way, "All right." It was all right with Nat if the burning beams or falling walls were hanging over him, for I must in all truthfulness say that I never, in all my fire experience, saw a man stick to his post with such stubbornness, or leave it with such unwillingness, when it was found necessary to give the order. On this occasion he displayed more than his usual quiet pluck, and spoke more words than I think I ever heard him utter at any one single fire. When I reached him, I told him I was afraid that he would have to back down. He wanted to know what for. I replied that the building was considered unsafe, and the Chief had ordered me to back him down if I considered his position unsafe, and I was very doubtful if he could hold his own much longer. If the fire reached the open attic toward the clock in the centre of the building, it was all up with the hotel. He seemed to take the backing down very much to heart, and muttered something about not being so ready to back down myself sometimes, and

I might give a fellow a chance. To hear Nat Cairns make use of such a number of words at one time, and under such circumstances, was one of the many wonders that could not be accounted for, and I knew that there must be some strange things passing in his mind. I felt for him, and I said, "Nat, there is only one way you can keep your ground, and that is, if you can succeed in pushing your way through the trap hole and bring your stream to bear on the front of the building around the clock, I think it will be all right." He got a short ladder, and rallied his men. I told him I would go out and see how things looked, and if I saw the water coming out of either of the small windows that were on each side of the clock, I would then be satisfied that the danger would be over. I made my way into the street, and met the Chief on his way into the building. He asked me how things looked. I replied I thought there was no danger so far; that three or four of the streams were doing splendid work. He said: "I think you had better back down your stream" (for he still considered it my stream). I was about to obey, when I replied that I thought that if one or two of the branchmen that were changing their positions when I was up succeeded in bringing their streams to bear on the parts of the building before mentioned, it would be all right. Chief Bertram, although a man

who had to be obeyed when he spoke, would still listen to any suggestion coming from his men, and when I asked him to come out to see how they were getting along, he consented willingly; and, as we went out to the centre of the street to have a good view of the position, we met the two gentlemen previously mentioned, surrounded by a number of others, discussing the situation. One of them called out, "Well, Bertram, you seem determined either to save that building or lose a number of your men." The Chief replied, "Gentlemen, if you do not see the water coming out of either of those small windows alongside of the clock in five minutes, I will withdraw my men and lose the building." I no sooner heard this than I rushed up stairs to where Nat's stream was, and called on him to play in the direction I pointed him. He did so, and, before the five minutes were up, I heard a shout in the street, and a cheer, which satisfied me that at last the dangerous part of the building had been reached. I think, at this stage, a little explanation is required to show how much stress has been laid on that part of the building where the clock was placed.

The clock was placed in the centre of the building, surrounded by heavy woodwork, and some of the main beams ran into this woodwork, and there can be no doubt had the fire, which had reached the clock-tower, been allowed to progress, the main

supports of the wood work would have given way, the front wall going and taking with it the beams and flooring of the top stories. The result would, undoubtedly, have been that the remainder of the building would have followed suit, and there would have been placed on the death-roll a few more heroes, alas! too soon forgotten. But well did the members of the Brigade sustain the oft-repeated assertion of the public and press of Montreal—"Second to none." Seldom, if ever, have I seen at least a goodly portion of the Brigade behave with such coolness, bravery and determination, under such trying and dangerous circumstances, and, did space permit, nothing would give me more pleasure than to place on record many of the heroic deeds I witnessed that night. But, although the centre of the enemy was broken and routed, the right and left wings had to be attended to. Complete victory, however, was looming up in the distance, and well did those plucky men follow up the advantage gained, although they were tired and sore, aye, and hungry too, for firemen can get hungry as well as other people, especially when they go through days or even weeks of wear and tear of body in a fire-house. Some people may think that it is no great matter to extinguish a fire, and those standing outside admire some of the noble fellows ascending a ladder to meet the fiery foe belching out of the windows. That

is all right; I have no fault to find with such work; it has got to be done, and if done well there is risk in it. But if you want to see the true fireman, you have to enter the building with him, from the time he steps into the broken door or window, ascends the dark stairs through the dense, stifling smoke, onward, upward, plenty of smoke but no fire yet. No true fireman ever calls for his water until he either sees or hears the flames. Like the order given at Alma, "Don't fire until you can see the white of the enemy's eyes," don't call for your water until you feel the heat of the fire. But come along still farther away up into that large warehouse. The flames are roaring above. Don't you hear them? "But I don't know the way! I never was in the building before! I do not know where the stairs are!" Never mind, follow your nose. If you do not soon find the fire, it will find you. "But I might fall down a hatchway?" Well, what of it? As good men as you have fallen down hatchways before. "But I am suffocating! I can't stand this!" Well, go home to your mother, and tell her never to let you out to a fire again. But come, we are not done yet. "Why, the fire is over!" Oh, yes, the fire is over, but we have to take a look around. "What is that?" Not much, only about a few hundred weight of plaster dropped from the ceiling on your head. "Hallo! where are you gone

to ?" Down to the next flat. "How did you get there ?" Fell through that burned hole in the floor. "Are you not hurt ?" No, have got used to it. "How am I going to get down ?" Come down the same way. If you light on your head it will only break your neck, and there are lots to be found like you. But you had better take my advice and go home, and when your dear pa condescends to rise from underneath the Corporation blankets at noon, say, "Oh, dear pa, do not stand up in the Council chamber again and say that you can get firemen for fifty cents a day."

A ridiculous incident took place at an early stage of the fire. One of the boarders, a stranger in the city, and I believe in the country, managed to pick up most of his effects, including a solid leather hat-box, with about a dozen straps and buckles. As soon as he had deposited his goods in Victoria square, he took out his handkerchief and wiped his brow, called for a cab, and picking up his worldly goods, jumped in and told the cabby to drive on. The cabby asked, "Where ?" He shouted, "Anywhere! behind the mountain if you like, as long as you get me away from this 'blasted' city."

Another amusing incident took place. There had been so much confusion at the outbreak of the fire that the inmates of the hotel got their things pretty well mixed up. There was also a good deal

of plundering done in the excitement. As I was passing one of the front bedrooms on the first flat, I discovered two of the light-fingered gentlemen in front of the looking glass at the dressing bureau. I was in a hurry, and about to pass on, when I took another thought, and just as I stepped inside of the door I saw one of them remove something from the dressing-case. I jumped at him at once, and told him to lay that down. He turned on me and wanted to know what I meant. He was not doing anything. I thundered out to drop what he had in his hand and get out quick. He looked at me, but I tell you that I was dead in earnest. He dropped what he had in his hand, and sneaked out, followed by his companion. Could I have found a policeman at the time I would have had them arrested, but there were too many stirring events going on at the time for me to give them the attention their conduct deserved. On looking at what he had dropped I found it to be a set of jewellery, and although I do not pretend to be a judge, I was satisfied that they were of great worth, and I was not mistaken, for, on returning them to the owner afterward, I was told they were worth over two hundred dollars. I gave as much attention after this as I could to securing valuables belonging to the boarders, and as soon afterwards as possible I advertised, giving a list of articles, and inviting

parties to call and claim them by proving property. Well, I had quite a time, and managed to give pretty fair satisfaction, until I came to one old lady. I had recovered over eight hundred dollars' worth for her, and she acknowledged that she had recovered everything but a small foot-bath. She gave me more trouble over that foot-bath than all the others put together. At last, I found it in a vacant store in Winks' block, where quite a number of things were lying around to be claimed, and gave it to my eldest son to take to her room in the Ottawa Hotel. He came back in a short time and told me she wanted to see me. Being very busy at the time, and thinking that she might want me to find a cake of well-worn soap, or something similar, for her, I sent my son to tell her it was impossible for me to go, but to tell him what she wanted to find out next, and I would try and find it. She told him that she had recovered everything she had lost, and that she wanted to see myself. He brought me her message, so I sent him back with the answer that unless she wished to see me on business, she would have to excuse me, as my hands were full. Back he went, and when she found out that I could not come, she told my son that she thanked me very much for all the trouble I had gone to, and handed him *a dollar*. He thanked her very much, but declined it.

On the morning of the fire we were ordered to examine every room in the hotel, to see that no one was remaining there. I was one of the searchers, and had gone into every room, looked under beds, behind doors, etc. All the doors yielded to us, and we had no trouble in conducting the search, with the exception of one door at the end of a passage. This door would not give way, although off the latch. We were about to force it when someone called out that it was only a small room used by the servants for the purpose of keeping their brooms, slop pails, etc. We were satisfied, and gave up our search. This was about six o'clock in the morning, so that after six hours' hard fighting one by one the companies packed up their reels, etc., and wended their way home to wash up, change clothes, and be ready at a moment's notice to rush forth to duty. I had not been long home when a message came that an old gentleman named Hoytt was missing, and requesting me to come at once and conduct a search for him. I went, and on my arrival I found quite a commotion. It had been thought all the time that the old gentleman had succeeded in getting out, as one of the servants had seen him on the stairs dragging down his trunk. But, nothing being heard of him in any of the hotels or anywhere about, the proprietors and others, becoming uneasy, decided to make a thorough search of the building. We com-

menced to go over the same ground as we had done earlier in the morning, and had got about half through, when all at once I remembered the small room at the end of the passage, where the door was found so hard to force. I told those who were searching to stop and come with me; so we went and found the door in the same position as it was when we tried it earlier in the morning. I gave it a push, and it gave a little with me, but as soon as I let go, the door was forced back into its old position, as if some elastic substance was behind it. I knew at once what made the door swing back; so, before we forced our way in, I sent one of my men for the waggon, and after telling the police to clear the place, we put our shoulders to the door and in it went, disclosing to our view the body of Mr. Hoytt, in a half-sitting position. We at once examined him, but found him quite dead and getting cold. The body was at once conveyed to the General Hospital, after which I returned home to try and get a few hours' rest, and so ended a night of fearful scenes and thrilling adventures. I cannot close the account of this disastrous fire without again calling on the proper authorities to put into force without delay the by-law (long ago passed), compelling proprietors to place proper means of escape in their hotels and public buildings; and, while on this matter, I will place before my readers a letter

published by me in the *Gazette* a few days after the fire, and although there have been many fire escapes presented to the public since, still, after nearly nine years have gone by, Montreal is in as bad, if not a worse, position than then; and while there are at present many simpler means than the one I suggest, I will give you my opinion at that time, and by and bye I will give you my opinion of what is best at the present day. The article was headed

"PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS."

To the Editor of the *Gazette*:—

DEAR SIR,—Allow me through your widely circulated paper to make a few suggestions anent the late disastrous fire at the St. James Hotel:

1st. To have rope ladders in every bedroom. This could be done by bolting a roller to the floor, the rope ladder to be the exact length of the distance from the window to the street, with a round ball of sufficient weight attached to propel it down and prevent it from swinging to and fro in the wind.

2nd. The usual sofas that are in almost every bedroom could be arranged so as to hide it when not required; that the waiter conducting parties to their rooms should point out and explain the simple manner of working it; also, that instructions be printed on the usual notices that are posted up in the rooms.

3rd. The cost of fitting up these ladders would amount to a paltry sum, and I am convinced that parties occupying rooms in a crowded hotel, with its complicated passages and winding stairs, would be willing to be taxed a small sum for the maintenance of the same.

4th. I am also convinced that they would materially aid the Fire Brigade in the execution of their duty. Picture to yourself,

Mr. Editor, the shouts of joy that would have burst from the firemen and hundreds of spectators who lined the streets, had they seen even two or three rope ladders dangling from the fourth or fifth stories of the St. James Hotel yesterday morning, how nimbly would our firemen have run up the ladders, vieing with one another who would be first, and the heartrending scenes that were witnessed would have been avoided.

5th. These ladders would be of still greater use in rooms where there are women and children. A fireman could mount the ladder with a rope and wide belt attached to his body, strap the belt under the armpits, and lower them down. He could also, if the style of the building permitted, haul up the hose, make it fast to the roller on the floor, and keep the fire in check; and he would be the more likely to perform his duty well, knowing that in case of danger he has an easy means of escape. This not only applies to hotels, but should be adopted by tenants of every large building or tenement."

I could make many more suggestions, but at present I think I have said enough; but I will go more freely into the matter when I deal with "The Brigade, its Past and Present."

FIRE IN A NUNNERY.

HEROISM AND PRESENCE OF MIND OF NUNS—A BRAVE SUPERIORESS.

Concerning a fire in a nunnery, or rather fires in nunneries—for while I only intended to deal with one particular fire, others have come to my recollection—I think I would not be doing right did I not place on record my opinion and admiration of the order, discipline, self-devotion and heroism of those noble women, and thousands of the outside world would change their opinions were they to know or have occasion to have any dealings with them. I know that since I have had to do duty on many occasions in nunneries, I have changed my opinion. My only reason for referring to the other fires is to show my readers the splendid discipline and order that is maintained, for the purpose of bringing it before the notice of school commissioners, principals of colleges, managers of public halls, or wherever large audiences assemble; indeed, it would be no harm in the family. There was an understanding between the heads of one of the nunneries and myself that in the event of our being called on, we would

attend to the call as quietly as possible, that is, without the usual hub-bub and ringing of bells. The nunnery alluded to is on St. Jean Baptiste street, and being a very large one, we were called there very often. On one of these occasions we were called to extinguish a fire that had occurred under the grate in the fire-place, in one of the large rooms. The room was occupied at the time by a large number of nuns. It was my custom to leave the other men at the door until I found out what was the matter. On my arrival on this occasion I was conducted upstairs, and as soon as I got into one of the long, wide passages I perceived at once that there was a fire in the building, and, as I was about to proceed further, the superioress of the nunnery asked me in a very polite manner to wait a minute, and ringing a bell the door on my left opened, and about twenty-five or more nuns filed out across the passage into another room. I then entered the room they had just vacated, and what was my astonishment to find the room just filling with smoke. I never was so much astonished in all my life, having seen on so many occasions men, women and children rushing about and kicking up a fearful racket for not one-half the cause. The superioress and two of the nuns remained in the room all the time, directing us as to where they thought the trouble was. After cutting up a piece

of the floor we came to the cause of all the trouble, and with a few pails of water the fire was extinguished. We withdrew, and the nunnery resumed its usual quiet and calmness—quiet, did I say? why, it never had been anything else—no confusion of any kind; everything went on like clock work. (I learned something *that* day.) On another occasion, in the chapel, while the nuns were at prayers, the gauze and drapery around the altar took fire. We were brought over this time a little quicker than usual, and as soon as we arrived I took in the situation at once and ordered in a Babcock, and after considerable trouble and damage, in which all the inflammable material around the altar was burned or badly scorched, we succeeded in extinguishing the fire. All this time the nuns never budged, but remained reverently on their knees, with eyes turned heavenward, while we were hard at work cutting away the burned wood from around the altar; and although we made as little confusion as possible, still there was enough racket to frighten any ordinary person. The heat and smoke were also considerable, but they never flinched or moved, and again I learned something. I had with me at that time a red-hot Orangeman, only a few years out, and it was amusing to see him gazing on the kneeling nuns and looking as if he was in a trance, and when I asked him what he thought of them, he shouted

at the top of his voice, "By the hole in my coat they may call them what they like, but they are plucky anyhow." On another occasion, when a more serious fire occurred early one morning in the same nunnery, where two or three streams were called into play, and when a general alarm was sounded, they showed their superior system of going about things, and keeping everything in order; in fact, I cannot say too much in their praise in this connection. The fire might have taken us about half an hour or so to extinguish, but before it was quite out we were invited by sections into a large hall to partake of breakfast. The Chief sent us in by batches to get, as he thought, as usual, a cup of coffee; but what was our surprise to find a good substantial breakfast prepared for us; not the usual cup of coffee and bread and butter, but beefsteak, etc., etc., and, in fact, a first-class breakfast; and I have no hesitation in saying that long before the fire was over, and while we were in the very heat of the fight, orders had been given to have breakfast prepared for the firemen. I could mention many more cases in which the nuns have shown themselves a superior class of women; at least, those I have come in contact with; but I must hasten to give an account of the fire with which I had first intended to deal. This fire occurred in the soap-boiling room in the basement of the building,

which contained a large amount of combustible material to feed on. When we arrived and proceeded to find out where the fire was, we found we had no easy task before us, as the fire had broken out at the end of a long passage, and the said passage was full of smoke, and after making two or three attempts the branchman had to back out; first one and then another tried it, but not knowing the way, or in what position the fire was, they were not able to penetrate far enough to do any good, and there was no use letting on the water until we were sure what we were going to throw it on. I was about getting uneasy, as the thing was looking serious. I ordered the general alarm to be sounded. Just at this time the superioress of the nunnery came up, and said if we would follow her she would show us where the fire was. There was a stumper; "how was that for high?" I never was very high, but I felt considerably lower at that time. I ordered the men to get in plenty of hose and follow me. I started along the passage, as I thought, followed by the men, but imagine my surprise on finding the superioress beside me. I got down on my knees and crawled along the floor of the passage, and the nearer we went to the end the hotter it became, and I would have liked to have backed out, but there was that noble woman heading me off, and beckoning me on like a shadow. I have been in some pretty

hot places in my time, but I think that was as hot a furnace as I was ever in. At last we reached the fire. I said before it was in the soap-boiling department. Well, it was as nearly fire-proof as possible; that is, it was built of brick, with an iron door; and by the time we reached the fire the door was red hot, and in a few minutes would have fallen out, and if such a thing had happened before we reached it, that nunnery was doomed; nothing in the world would have saved it. As soon as I saw the state of things I hastened back to bring up the men and the hose, but had not gone far when I met them coming along on all fours, dragging the hose after them. I quickly got them into position, and not a moment too soon, for just as we reached the door down it came with a crash, and out burst the flames, but in the nick of time on came the water, and the boys jumped into the soap house with their usual dash, and after a short, sharp struggle the fire was conquered, but not without one or two of us getting our feet and hands badly burned with lye. Thus ended a fire which caused very little damage, but, as it was, through the presence of mind, coolness and pluck of a woman, a large conflagration was prevented, for the nunnery was in the midst of wholesale stores, and surrounded by numerous outbuildings, and there is no saying where the fire would have stopped. I beg my readers' forgiveness

if I have transgressed in anyway in placing before them the foregoing facts, as it is a delicate matter to handle, and while I am satisfied that I have not done full justice to the heroism and devotion of those noble women, still I am buoyed up with the hope that they at least will give me the credit of being honest all through the narrative, no matter what my abilities are, or in what uncultivated language I have expressed myself.

UPSET ON ST. GABRIEL STREET HILL.

MY LAST ACCIDENT—NEAR DEATH.

In recording this accident, it gives me considerable trouble to find matter sufficient to place before the public; for, although it was one of the most serious accidents of the many I have received, still there were none of the usual stirring events that had accompanied some of my previous accidents; and had death ensued, the cream of the glory would have been taken off from the glorious death of the brave fireman, by the simplicity of the accident. Had I been consulted on the matter, I would have preferred living a little longer; or, if I had to fall, I would have liked a little blaze around me; but to die from the effects of the upsetting of a waggon was hardly what I considered I was entitled to, after the many hair-breadth escapes I had come through, and the many injuries I had received; and although there was considerable sympathy for me at the time, still there were a good many who attributed my mishap to furious driving and utter disregard of my life. However, I will lay before my readers a straightforward statement of the circumstances, and let them be the judges; and while I admit that I may have

been a little rash on some occasions, and, as it were, courted death, I am satisfied that no other man could have acted better than I did at the time under the circumstances. It is not at the fire that the man runs the most risk, and certainly not at the time of the heat of the fire, for I believe there are more firemen killed or injured on the way to a fire or after the fire is over. It is after the fire that most of the danger is; for, according to the extent of the fire, the walls, flooring, etc., have been weakened, and the walls are more likely to go in or out, and one of the greatest mistakes that a Chief of any fire brigade can make is to keep his men prowling about the ruins after the fire is over, or send them into dangerous positions merely to put out the burning end of a beam. I have often seen men placed in such dangerous positions merely to gratify the pompous authority of an officious officer, who wished to let the multitude that usually congregate around a fire see that he was one having authority.

On a keen frosty morning in February, 1876, an alarm of fire was sounded. We hastened, with our usual speed, to answer the call, and I descending St. Gabriel street hill, a very hard hill to descend at any time, but more especially in the winter, as the hill is usually covered with ice, and has a sharp turn into Craig street. As I was about the centre of the hill, keeping the horses well in

[illegible] and intending to take as long a turn as possible, a large beer sleigh came along at a rapid rate, right in the track I would have to take. I saw at [illegible] that if I kept on the way I was going I would run right into the sleigh, and what the damage would have been no one could have told; but I had no time to think on such occasions—to think was to act, and I formed the idea at once of turning sharp to the right, and by so doing, avoid the collision that must otherwise have taken place, and I am confident I would have succeeded had the waggon not got the better of the horses and swung around on the clear ice, with tremendous force, into a deep cut (caused by the City Passenger sleighs always running in the same track), and thereby throwing the waggon into the air, smashing the bobs to atoms, and pitching men, covers, Babcocks, tools, etc., into the street. I, being on the off side, and up high on the driver's seat, was sent spinning higher in the air, and fell with a crash on the hard frozen ice in the street, where I lay like a lump of lead until picked up and taken home in a sleigh, and assisted upstairs by poor, unfortunate Frank Gundlack, then a reporter on one of the city papers, and who came to an untimely end in London, Ont. After I had lain down on the sofa in the parlor I felt somewhat the same as I felt when I received the accident at Savage's Oil Works; I felt as if I had

been all shaken to pieces, and was in a very bad humor, and would not allow anyone to do anything for me. At last I felt myself getting weak, but I managed to walk up stairs to my bedroom and take off my clothes without any assistance. I had no sooner done so than nature gave way, and off I went, regaining consciousness just as Dr. Finnie arrived. After the doctor had examined me, he said he would have to get assistance. So Dr. Roddick was sent for at once, and to work went those two experts. They wanted to give me chloroform, but I would not have it. I told them to go on with their work, and when I "squealed" that they could give me their stuff. My old and lamented friend George Lynch was with me all the time, and was the means of my bearing up better than I would otherwise have done, for after the doctors had got through with me, this was their report to a member of the press, who was in the room all the time :— "We regret to state that Captain McRobie, of the salvage corps, has sustained greater injuries by being upset from the waggon than was at first anticipated. In addition to two broken ribs, dislocated shoulder-blade, fracture of a small bone of the neck, and severe bruises to the hip, he has also burst a blood vessel in the side. He has been attended to by Drs. Finnie and Roddick, and although he is suffering considerable pain, yet he is getting on, under

the circumstances, as well as can be expected." I will leave my readers to judge the amount of pain I had to suffer while the doctors were fixing me up. One thing, I never "squealed," although I would have liked to more than once. One thing I do know, and that is that by the time the doctors were through with me the perspiration was running down their faces. I was confined to bed for a long time, and I don't think I ever was the same after that. It was the wonder of many as well as the doctors, that I weathered through it, but I have proved, on more than one occasion, that if there was not much of me what there was was *good*, and I question very much if there is a man living in Montreal, at the present time, who has come through as much as I have, and still be in the land of the living. Before closing the account of this accident, I cannot let pass a shabby trick that was played upon me by the present chief of the Department. There is a benevolent fund in connection with the Brigade, out of which each member receives a weekly allowance, when he is disabled while on duty. The accident I had received entitled me to such weekly allowance, and I was duly reported on the sick list. You are not expected to attend fires or take part in them, unless the fire is in the building in which you reside. Well, long before I was fit for duty, and while I was going about with my arm in a sling, a large fire oc-

curred in the large stores below St. Ann's Market, on St. Peter street, and belonging to the Nuns. An alarm sounding in that quarter at any time makes the brigade look sharp, but when the second alarm sounded, I knew that it must be something serious, and I became very restive and wished to be off to see what it was. A few of my friends dissuaded me from going. When the third alarm sounded, and my son, whom I had sent to the foot of the street to see what it was, returned, and told me it was the Custom House, I could stand it no longer. It was doing me more harm staying at home than going. So, I got a heavy coat buttoned over my shoulders, and with a couple of friends to look after me I started off to have a look at the fire. Just as I was going out of the door my wife told me to take care of what I was doing, and reminded me of the mean advantage that was taken of poor, "happy" Dick Choules by the same gentleman, when he (Dick) had his hand nearly taken off by a large stone striking it at the time of the explosion during the fire which caused the death of Scott and Thompson. Dick being in the engine-house one day when an alarm sounded, happened to slip in one of the tug pins with his good hand to give his comrades a chance to get out smartly; but this coming to the ears of the Chief, Dick was struck off the sick list. But to return to myself. As soon as I reached the fire, I happened to strike right on No. 2.

Their stream was up into the third-story window, and their branchman was in great danger of being burned. He was calling for water, but the water, although on at the hydrant, did not reach the branch. I at once discovered what the reason was. The hose had to pass into the gateway, behind the stairs, and between them and the gateway of A. W. Ogilvie had been passed so tightly around the corner that the water could not get through. I stooped down to pull it back with one hand, but found it too tight for me, so I called to the crowd to lay hold of the hose, and, under my directions, the water was allowed to pass through and reach the branch, just in time to save two of the men from getting a good scorching, if not something worse. The whole thing did not take more than a few seconds, but still long enough for one of the Chief's aids to see me, and in due time it was reported, and at the first meeting of the Board of Management I was stated to be fit for duty, and although some of the spirited men on the Board tried to reason the matter and show that I had done the city and the Brigade a good turn, it was of no use. From the time I directed the onlookers to haul back the hose to save the men of my own station from getting severely burned, I was struck off the sick list. Such actions do not encourage the men in their duty, but tend to degrade them and destroy the efficiency of the Department.

IN MEMORY

Of the brave men who met their death while in the discharge of their duty at the St. Urbain Street Fire, on Sunday, April 29th, 1877.

Melt hearts, flow tears ! Deep heavy cloud
Of dismal melancholy shroud—
Nay, overwhelm the stoniest breast !
Though ne'er before with grief oppressed,
Resist no more her powerful sway,
Enroused by such calamity,
As now o'erspreads its gloomy gown,
Like darkest night, our awe-struck town.

Fire—fierce, relentless element
Inters in the blackest cerement
Right noble heroes of the hose,
Enwrapped in death's most throes.

Borne hence, unwarned, and hurriedly
Rushed forth into eternity—
Inearthed, and deep wounds prostrated,
Grilled, wasted, and alive cremated,
Aloft, to meet their God, they rise,
Dragged ruthlessly from those they prize,
Enforced, unsummoned to the skies.

Hush ! let the funeral array
Of mourners wend their silent way ;
Let weeping mothers, widowed wives,
Orphans, bewailing fathers' lives,
Creep on, with measured tread, and slow,
Unfeigned, sincerest sympathy spread,
Sink down each heart, bend low each head,
To lamentations o'er the dead.

JAMES CRANSHAW.

ST. URBAIN STREET FIRE.

A MORNING OF SAD EVENTS—HEROISM AND PLUCK OF THE BRIGADE—SACRIFICE OF THE VICTIMS AND SCENES AT THEIR HOMES AND AT THE HOSPITAL—A GOOD WARNING DISREGARDED—WIDOWS AND ORPHANS CRYING FOR THEIR BREAD-WINNERS—A MOURNING CITY—A WEEK OF FUNERALS.

In recording this fire, I do so under the greatest difficulty. As the fearful scenes come fresh to my memory, my heart becomes full, and I have to lay down my pen and pause; but as I think it is a duty devolving on me to lay before the public a true and unvarnished account of the incidents which occurred at this fire, I ask my readers to bear patiently with me if I should fail in doing full justice to this terrible calamity; and I pray God I may never have to record the like again.

Never did sun rise on a more peaceful city than on that beautiful Sabbath morning of the 29th of April, 1877; never did sun set on a more melancholy or dismal one, where so many homes were made desolate; and never did men answer more promptly to the call of duty than did the gallant men of the Fire Brigade on that morning.

Light in heart, light in spirits, and light in clothing (for they had not only shaken off the dull monotony of the long winter, but they had discarded their winter and donned their summer uniform), and rushed forth to conquer and to record one more victory, but, alas, many went forth to death.

The alarm sounded at 5 a.m., which called us to the Oil Cabinet and Novelty Works, situated on St. Urbain street. On account of the combustible nature of the contents of the building, the fire made rapid progress, and before the Brigade had got thoroughly to work it had full possession of the building, which was a very large one; but the men went to work with a will, spurred on by the thought that if they did not succeed in extinguishing the fire before the floors gave way, they had either to back out or meet certain death—and backing out was one of the things that seldom enter the mind of a Montreal fireman. On New Year's morning, 1875, the same building was partly burned, and Chief Bertram cautioned the Brigade at that time that if they ever had to deal with a fire in that building again, that unless they got it under speedy control to stand clear, or lives would be lost; and alas! his prediction proved too true, and well would it have been had his warning been listened to that morning, for seldom was that experienced old fireman far astray in his opinions, and more than one old fireman knew that

morning that men were pushed into certain death, and at least one of them made an attempt to dissuade the men from going into that Valley of Death, where they could do no service of any account. Be that as it may, they went, they faced death, but by whose orders He who searches the hearts of every one knows; and to Him, and Him only, will they have to render an account at the last day, for not only are the dead calling for redress, but the living widows and orphans are calling for those that were near and dear to them; but, alas, they call in vain.

To return to the fire. The Brigade worked as they never worked before; but it was of no use; company after company were driven back, step by step, out of the building; and although they fought with a stubbornness I had seldom ever seen before, it was all to no purpose, and in less than half an hour every company had to vacate the building, and give their attention to the surrounding buildings. At this time a quiet but thrilling scene was taking place in the office, which very nearly ended in the death of myself and two of my men—Choules and Jackson. Poor Choules fell, one of the victims, after. We had collected all the books and office furniture, and covered them up, and as that was about the only thing we could do in the salvage line, we went to the assistance of the Brigade; but when I saw the headway the fire was gaining, I called to my men

to be ready to remove covers if the Brigade were beaten back. We entered the building, Choules and Jackson into the office, I ascending the stairs where No. 5 were nobly fighting the flames and holding their ground at fearful risk, and I am convinced had they been reinforced by say two or three more streams they would have succeeded in saving that part of the building, and consequently the lives of the men, for it was from that same point that the battle was fought and won in 1875. Just before going down stairs I asked Guardian Mann, of No. 5, if he thought he could hold his own. He said he was doubtful, but that he would try his best, and would not back out until the flames drove him out; but he said, if I only had some assistance, I think I could manage it yet; and he urged on me to try and get a couple more streams in. I replied, "My dear fellow, you know it is no use for either you or I to try that; we would not be listened to." I left him fully convinced that unless more streams were placed in that part of the building that it was all up with it. I went down stairs into the office, where I found Choules and Jackson looking after the covers. I told them I thought we would have to withdraw them, as the fire was gaining very fast. I had scarcely the words out of my mouth when we heard a rumbling noise on the stairs. It was No. 5 backing down, and not a moment too soon, for the

flames had burst through a partition that was between them and the main body of the fire. I called to my men to withdraw the covers, but it was too late. I went to the office door. It was no use there, the passage was enveloped in flames, and as I shut the door again the volume of air and flames that came rushing against the door seemed as if some one was pushing it open. There was only one other way of escape, and that was through the window which was in the second story, for there was a high basement with steps leading up to the offices. I called to Choules and Jackson to make for the window and hurry up, as we had not a moment to spare. They quickly broke the window. I called on them to jump, as I found the door getting hot, and the office getting full of smoke and hot as an oven ; and as they jumped I rushed for the window, and as the three of us landed on all fours in the street, the flames came rushing through the window after us ; and as we picked ourselves up, Choules remarked, "A narrow escape that time, Captain." I said: "Yes, Dick, but our time has not come yet." Little did I think, when uttering these words, that poor, happy Dick, in a short time, would be numbered with the dead. The die was cast ; the battle so nobly fought was lost, and the only thing remaining to be done was to save the surrounding property, which was composed of a rabble

of wooden sheds and stables. I proceeded at once to the south or Craig street side, were No. 1 were manfully fighting the fire. I looked up at the high wall and told No. 1 to back out at once, as the walls would be down in a short time. They obeyed me at once, and not a moment too soon, for down came a portion of the south wall right on the spot where they had stood a moment before. As it was, the bricks caught Chester and Beers, of No. 1, and buried them up to the knees; and had my warning not been taken two more noble and good firemen would have been placed on the death roll. If the previous warning given by the late Chief Bertram had not been enough, surely the falling of the south wall was sufficient to warn those at the upper side to withdraw out of that alley of death. About this time a most determined fight took place with the fire in front of the building, but I will give here the account as given to the public by one of the best Fire reporters at that time:—

"The Skinner ladder had been previously raised, and three men mounted it, taking with them a branch which they directed upon the upper stories. They appeared to obtain with the water they threw into the building an advantage, but it was not of long duration, for the fire burned downwards and burst out in a sheet underneath them, and for a while they were hidden from view, their comrades and the throng

which had gathered trembled with dread, giving them up for lost. A change in the wind brought the top of the ladder into sight again, and it was seen to be on fire, but happily the dauntless three fought their way down, and they reached the ground alive, but bearing upon their persons painful traces of the fearful ordeal through which they had to pass. They were all badly burned. The Brigade was commanded by Chief Patton on the north side; assistant Chiefs McCullogh and Naud in the rear; while Captain McRobie labored on the Craig street side, and kept the fire in check there. When the Skinner ladder had caught fire and those that were upon it were taken away bruised and scorched, the sensation in the crowd became terribly intense, and people surged about fearing all dangers possible, and while the excitement grew, the heat increased in power, until it became unbearable; then it drove them back by degrees to a respectful distance and opened an attack upon the houses on the opposite side of the street. It was a fortunate thing they happened to be constructed of non-inflammable material, or they would have quickly yielded. As it was, door and window sashes were scorched and blistered, and glass broken in every direction; the roofs in some instances became ignited, and shortly there was a scene of confusion worse confounded which tried the patience of the toiling fireman to the utmost,

and as this went on the heat grew in intensity, until it was almost impossible to approach the burning building, and how the Brigade stood its augmenting blasts was a marvel. They appeared to be endowed with the fire defying qualities of the Salamander, and moved about in perfect contempt of an element that was asserting its sway over material far more durable than human tissue."

But I will again resume my own account. The taking fire of the building on the opposite side of the street, I have every reason to believe, was the cause of saving my life. From the position where I was standing at the time of the falling of the south walls, I could see the buildings, and as the walls went out they sent out a shower of sparks and flames which set fire to the scuttle board on the roof of one of the buildings. I at once perceived the danger, and despatched Choules for a Babcock. I grasped an axe and rope out of a reel box, and crawling under the gateway ascended to the roof by the back stairs, for it was impossible to enter by the front doors, on account of the heat. With the assistance of some civilians and several buckets of water, we succeeded in putting out the fire, which was making its way into the garret. While in the garret I thought I heard a dull sound but took no notice of it at the time. I had passed from garret to garret with buckets of water, putting out the fires that had taken around

the woodwork of the scuttle-holes, all this time wondering what was keeping Choules, unconscious all this time that a fearful scene was going on down in the street. I had just swung myself from the eaves of one of the buildings on to a gallery when a tremendous crash took place. I remarked to some of the men (that were helping me at the time) that I hoped to God that none of our poor fellows were under those walls, for well I knew what that crash meant. It was the second fall of the north wall, the first having taken place when I was in the garret, which I only thought I heard. I made all haste down and out into the street, with a fearful dread coming over me. I was making my way to the upper side of the building when I saw Mr. Gilbert, of the *Montreal Gazette*. I said, "What's up, Gil., are any of the boys hurt?" He turned around, and seemed surprised to see me there. He caught me by the shoulders, and, shoving me toward the building, said, "For God's sake, hurry up and go in; there are ten or twelve of the men under the ruins." I did not need to be told a second time, but when I reached the scene there were willing hands at work. But how am I to tell of the scene that followed? It is impossible. No words can describe it. It would not only take too much time and space, but it would take a man with iron nerve and dead to all feeling to put on record the scenes as they occurred. The work of

rescuing the injured and finding the dead was going nobly on; men could be seen with the blood running from their hands, cut and bruised in scraping off the almost red hot bricks and *débris*. But no word of complaint; no murmur of pain. Their flesh was dead to pain in their eagerness to get at their buried comrades, of whom there were sixteen, all huddled together in a space not more than twelve feet square. At last, what is this? It is—no—yes, it is an elbow of a man. Scrape away a little more of the hot bricks from around him; pull out his arm. I take his pulse. No pulse there. By this time the upper part of his body is uncovered. He is lying partly on his face and side. I lift up his head and turn up the face. Yes, it is poor Higgins. "Take care, there," comes from another corner, "you are tramping on some one." Why take care? There is no feeling in those two shapeless beings, clasped in one another's arms, in life battling side by side, in death not separated. Another is found, and still another, until seven firemen and four citizens were taken out of that alley of death. Are there any more? Some say "yes," some say "no." Call the Roll of Companies. Yes, still five more missing. To work again. Send in fresh men. Get some gloves, the bricks are getting hotter as we get deeper down. What is—is that a— "For God's sake, men, take care, you are trampling on the living." What is this? scrape

away the bricks and mortar quick. A head protrudes out from amongst the rubbish. Who is it? The lips are moving. He cannot speak, his mouth is full of dirt. Get some brandy. It is Nolan. Another is unearthed. It is poor Stollary, moaning piteously to be taken out, as he is roasting. Still another, Charlie Reddy, calm and self-possessed; not a murmur. Have patience, Charlie boy, we will soon get you out. "All right, boys, get out any that are worse than me, I am all right." Go on, the work is not done yet. Who is this? Ben; quiet, steady, Ben Harrison; no murmur either, waiting his turn to be dug out of his furnace grave. Still another, and, thank God, the last. But who is it? "What, Holtby? Alf. my poor boy, how are you?" "I don't know, I think I am roasted." Away with them—some to their homes, some to the Hospital.

Let us pause here. Let us sit down and rest—no, not rest—there is still work to be done. But we may think—yes, think—but what will we think of? Will thinking bring back those heroes? Will thinking bring back the flower of the Brigade? No. But can we realize that these shapeless, disfigured masses of humanity are the noble, stalwart fellows that we saw but a short time ago full of life and daring, rushing on to certain death to save the lives of their comrades, for by their death the others were saved; and I will here explain as briefly as

possible how the last five named were in the alley when the first fall of the walls took place, and it was the brave attempt to rescue those that resulted in the death of the victims before mentioned. They were in the act of removing the debris off their comrades when the second fall took place. Were they taken by surprise? No, my friends, they were not taken by surprise; they expected it, but could they, or rather would they, desert their unfortunate comrades? No, that was the last thing in their minds. Death might come, but cowardice and dishonor never! Let us picture to ourselves the position of those men. The first batch covered up to their chins, and some of them covered altogether, with their faces upward, watching the swaying of the high brick wall above them, imploring the rescuers not to leave them. Those noble fellows giving them words of cheer, and telling them that if they could not rescue them they would die with them. What heroism, reader! Can you show a parallel to this? What must have been their feelings, working as they never worked before, with bleeding and bruised hands, in à stooping position, one eye looking up at the tottering wall above them, knowing that it was only a matter of a very short time, when down it would come. The next misplaced beam or the next gust of wind, and then—well, they were in God's hands. At last, it came. They saw it. Did they shrink from their self-

imposed task? Did they break their word with their comrades? Did they jump to one side, as they might have done, and saved themselves? No! Then what did they do? Not much. When they saw the wall falling they only threw their bodies on those of their comrades, and died there, thereby saving their comrades' lives. Was that heroism? If not, I do not understand the meaning of the word.

Once again my feelings almost overcome me at the thought of some of the scenes I witnessed at the homes of the poor victims and at the hospital, which were of a nature to melt the hardest heart. A strange circumstance occurred at this fire, which seems as if God had ordered it so. After Choules, Jackson and myself had escaped from the window, Choules told Jackson that he would run home (which was close by) and waken up his wife to see the fire, and not to say anything to the boss—that he would not be long. So off he went, woke her up, told her to hurry up, as it was a very large fire, and as he was leaving, his wife, who was very much attached to him, called out, "Take care of yourself, Dick." It was just as he arrived back that the south wall fell, and I despatched him for the Babcock, and it was while passing up the street that the first fall of the north wall took place, and poor Dick was one of those that jumped to the rescue but never returned.

Mrs. Choules had just arrived as the second fall took place, and the wail went up from the onlookers, and the shout went through the crowd, "My God, there are fifteen or twenty firemen buried under the walls!" She was about the first person I saw when I was going into the alley. She called out, "Mr. McRobie, where is Dick?" I replied, "He is all right," for I was under the impression that he had gone to the top of the buildings on the other side of the street; but she would not be pacified, and cried out in the most pitiful manner, "O, don't deceive me; I know he is in there." Just then one of the onlookers said, "Yes, I saw Dick go in." I cannot here describe the terrible agony of that poor woman. Her eldest son was standing by at the time, and I told him to take her home at once, and I went to assist in recovering the unfortunates.

Another scene, very calm, but, oh, how terrible in its calmness! like the still, stifling atmosphere before heaven opens her flood-gates to pour her refreshing showers upon earth. It was my unpleasant duty to convey the remains of Mr. Lynch, foreman of the Water-Works, to his home, accompanied by two of his bosom friends. As we neared his home I suggested that we would leave the waggon a short distance from the door, and I would precede them and prepare Mrs. Lynch for the sad event. I went and rang the door-bell. Mrs.

Lynch answered it. I looked at her, but words utterly failed me. She looked me straight in the face and said, in such a calm manner that it startled me:

GEORGE LYNCH.

"I know all about it, Mr. McRobie; bring him in." Had I not known Mrs. Lynch, and the great affection she had for her husband, I would have thought her one of the most hard-hearted women I had ever

seen. But little did I know what was passing in that poor woman's mind at the time, and the tremendous strain on her nerves. We brought the body in, Mrs. Lynch going about arranging the place to lay it on, and I still wondering what all this meant. After we had done all we could, and I was about leaving, for my work was not half over yet, I looked at Mrs. Lynch—and what a face! The thought flashed through me as having heard that women have been known to have broken their hearts when they could not get relief in tears. I could stand it no longer, so whispering to one of his friends, "Get her to cry," I took another look at my old friend, and left the house, a sad man. Sad did I say? That word does not half express my feelings then. But why so sad? Who was he? I will tell you. He was one of the old twelve apostles, my boon companion in the Company; and we had stood side by side in many a hard-fought battle, for a braver or truer fireman than George Lynch never breathed; and if that was not enough to make me sad, let me tell you that he was not only a true and brave fireman, but in every other respect he was a noble man; kind and generous to a fault, always a friend to the needy; ever kind and considerate to those employed under him; and hundreds of Water-Works' employees of all nationalities have cause to mourn the day that George

Lynch, their foreman and best friend, was taken out of that alley of death—a corpse.

I next went to the residence of John Livingston, foreman of the Skinner ladder. Although fearfully

JOHN LIVINGSTON.

maimed, he was still alive. His limbs were broken, and his flesh was falling off his bones; but never did I see such courage and patience under such circumstances. The doctor was in attendance, and said he could do nothing for him there, that I had

better remove him to the Hospital at once. We rolled him as easily as we could in bed clothes, placed him in a salvage cover, twisted it at each corner, and four of us carried him down stairs and placed him in the waggon. He never murmured; but once, when the horses became restive and gave the waggon a jerk going over a crossing, he said, "O, go slow, Mac, like a good fellow." We carried him into the Hospital and laid him on a bed. He seemed to know he was dying, as he said to me, "Mac, I want to tell you something." I said, "All right, Jack, as soon as I attend to the others I will come back and hear what you have to say," for I did not think he was so near death, as he seemed so strong; but I never knew what he had to tell me, as he was dead before I returned: his spirit had taken its flight, and brave, manly John Livingston's earthly troubles were at an end.

My next journey on that eventful day was to No. 3 Engine-house, where the body of Michael Barry had been conveyed. There he lay, surrounded by numerous weeping friends, calm and still in death: in life as true a specimen of the generous, light-hearted Irishman as ever breathed, ever ready for fun or frolic. We took him to his father's home, and as he was carried into the house, such moaning and lamentations came from his aged father and mother, and screams from a devoted sister, as only

true and affectionate Irish hearts can give forth, that the hundreds of sympathising friends that surrounded the house gave way to their pent-up feelings and

MICHAEL BARRY.

added their tributes of sorrow to those of the unfortunate victim's relatives. Poor, light-hearted Barry was the only support of his aged parents and orphan child, for his wife died a short time before and was therefore saved from passing through the

trying ordeal. Let us hope that although separated on earth they are joined in heaven.

We next wended our way to No. 9 Engine-house, to take a look at the remains of our jovial comrade

WILLIAM PERRY.

William Perry; and if ever there was a perfect model man in the flesh there lay one, although the cold hand of death had placed its touch on him in the prime of life. He was true as steel, manly in everything, brave

as a lion, and generous to a fault, the only support of a widowed mother. The same scene surrounded the remains as at other places, for he was a universal favorite, and the tears could be seen rolling down many a manly cheek as they stood gazing down at the calm-set features of him who in life had been the life and spirit of the engine-house, a splendid specimen of an athlete. His body lay in a very appropriate place, under the collection of his many hard-won trophies. Beckingham, as he stood gazing on his dead comrade whom he loved so well, said: "No man would have persuaded him to enter the gateway merely to save the building, nor would he have allowed his men to enter, so convinced was he of the dangerous condition of the wall; but when he saw his companions struggling in the agonies of death, all thought of self-preservation vanished, and with a few other men he rushed forward. It was then that noble fellow met his death" (pointing to the remains, while the tears trickled down his cheeks), "and now I bring him home to his mother, dead."

I will not attempt to depict the scenes that occurred at the houses of the two victims, Higgins and Choules. It would not only be repeating the same heartrending scenes over again, but it is impossible for me to do them justice, as words utterly fail me, for while they are not only fresh in my memory and engraved on my heart, I cannot give expression to them.

Thomas Higgins had seen considerable service, and was a quiet, unassuming good fellow (steady Tom, as he was called), minded his own business, and never interfered with other people's affairs; he was a good husband and father, only thirty-five

THOMAS HIGGINS.

years of age, and left a wife and three children, of whom he was the only support—the youngest never having seen its father—a very hard trial to its poor widowed mother; but God has promised to be a

husband to the widow, and a father to the fatherless, and we will leave them in His hands, who never breaks His promise.

Richard Choules (happy Dick), loved by all, kind-hearted, the life of the station, a cheery good day to every one, his death was a sad blow to his family,

RICHARD CHOULES.

for a happier man and wife I never saw, and he doted on his little ones, of whom he had four. To say that Dick was a great favorite in the brigade is saying very little. To me his death was a great loss, being my assistant on the salvage waggon. I have never had a man under me that I could place more confidence in than I did in my lamented friend.

Ever prompt in duty; courageous as only an Englishman can be, he was ever found at his post, as faithful as a watch dog; and it is with feelings of sorrow that I pen those few lines, as my thoughts wander back to the many happy days spent together.

WILLIAM FERGUSON.

The last, William Ferguson (old Willie), one of the oldest and most respected members of the Brigade, having served not less than forty years in different companies, and at the time of his death was hose-maker and general repairer to the Department. Although a man well advanced in years, he was still hale and hearty; and although his duty did

not require him to attend all fires, he was ever to be found ready to assist by his hands and advice to combat the fiery element; and by his death we have a grand illustration of the mettle the Montreal firemen was composed of, for not only did the youth of twenty-two summers rush on to certain death, to the rescue of his comrades in peril, but the old veteran of sixty-five years became young again, forgetting amidst the din and crash of falling walls, and the roaring of the flames, everything but that there were lives to be saved; and lives of daring young spirits that were dear to the old man's heart.

I visited him in the Hospital, where he lay unconscious; for he had received some fearful wounds all over his body, but the most serious, which was the cause of his death, was a fracture of the skull. No one who looked at the firm set lips and large prominent features of that hardy old man could doubt for one moment but that there lay a man of sterling worth. I was with him about two hours before his death. In going up to his bed I asked him how he was, and if he knew me. He looked at me and uttered some unintelligible words, which I did not understand; but there can be no doubt but that they were Gaelic, for while his spirit was wending its way, his mind had wandered back to his native land and his native language.

I must hasten to bring the recital of this sad and

dreadful catastrophe to a conclusion, although the scenes that could still be recorded would fill page after page with thrilling matter, such as the patience and endurance of the sufferers in the hospital and at their homes, for independent of those already mentioned as killed or taken out of the ruins maimed for life, there were also others who had received more or less injury which disabled them from duty. Words are weak to express the heroism and fortitude of those noble women left widows, and as I puzzle my brains to find words to express my admiration of the pluck and heroism of those noble fellows, my mind wanders back to the first time I heard Tennyson's *Charge of the Light Brigade* recited by a sergeant of the Army Hospital corps. It was around the social board where kindred spirits had met to do honor to the anniversary of the birthday of our beloved Queen, and my patriotic soul was stirred to its depths as I listened, but to-day I feel that the bravery of Montreal's noble firemen equals, if it does not surpass it.

CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE.

"Forward, the Light Brigade,
Take the guns!" Nolan said;
Into the Valley of Death
Rode the Six Hundred.

Theirs not to make reply,
Theirs not to reason why,
Theirs but to do and die—
Into the valley of death
  Rode the Six Hundred.

Cannon to the right of them,
Cannon to the left of them,
Cannon in front of them,
  Volleyed and thundered.

Stormed at with shot and shell,
Boldly they rode and well;
Into the jaws of death,
Into the mouth of hell,
  Rode the Six hundred.

Plunged in the battery smoke,
With many a desp'rate stroke,
The Russian line they broke;
Then they rode back, but not—
  Not the Six Hundred.

Cannon to the right of them,
Cannon to the left of them,
Cannon behind them,
  Volleyed and thundered.

Stormed at with shot and shell,
While horse and hero fell,
Those who had fought so well
Came from the jaws of death.
Back from the mouth of hell,
All that was left of them,
  Left of Six Hundred.

When can their glory fade?
Oh, the wild charge they made
All the world wondered!
Honor the charge they made!
Honor the Light Brigade,
  Noble Six Hundred!

While all honor is due to those noble British hearts for their great display of daring and dash in that ever memorable charge at Balaclava, there is a wide difference between the charge into the valley of death at Balaclava and the rush into the alley of death at St. Urbain street.

TO THE RESCUE THE FIRE BRIGADE.

"Forward, the whole Brigade,
Stand from the walls!" they said;
Into the alley of death
  Rushed the Brave Seven.

Theirs not to make reply,
Theirs not to reason why,
Theirs but to do and die—
Into the alley of death
  Rushed the Brave Seven.

Fire to the right of them,
Fire to the left of them,
Fire in front of them,
  Rose up to heaven.

Right at that tottering shell,
Boldly they rushed and well;
Into the jaws of death,
Into the mouth of hell,
  Rushed the Brave Seven.

Hid in the blinding smoke,
With many a desp'rate stroke,
The fiery line they broke;
Then they rushed back, but not—
  Not the Brave Seven.

Fire to the right of them,
Fire to the left of them,
Fire behind them,
  Rose up to heaven.

Under that crumbled shell,
Those who had fought so well,
Came from the jaws of death,
Back from the mouth of hell,
  But not—not the Brave Seven.

When can their glory fade?
Oh, the wild rush they made
'Neath the red heaven!
Honor the charge they made!
Honor the Fire Brigade,
  Immortal Seven.

In the first place, the soldier had everything to encourage him—noble leaders; the pomp and excitement of war around him; the order to advance; the word of command, which is never disobeyed by the true soldier; his fleet steed under him; his trusty

sword in his right hand to defend himself, and last, but not least, the thought of what they would say in England when they heard of that noble charge? Why, they would say it was nobly done! And what will my readers say of those noble fellows who perished in St. Urbain Street? No noble leader to show a good example and lead them on; no word of command; nothing to shield them from the falling walls and heavy timbers; no Victoria Cross looming up in the distance; nothing to prompt them but their true manhood and the nobleness of their nature; for there can be no denying the fact, when we look the matter straight in the face, that those heroic men went into that alley of death on that beautiful Sunday morning to the rescue of their comrades with the full conviction on their minds that their chances of ever coming out again alive were very small indeed.

But while we mourn the loss of so many true and tried men, it is a consolation to know that Montreal's spirited and wealthy citizens came to the assistance of the widows and orphans, for never did citizens of all nationalities come more nobly to the front in response to the call for help, while those who could not contribute in cash gave unbounded evidence of their sympathy and heartfelt sorrow at the sad calamity. Their many acts of kindness and words of comfort; the young men rallying around the fire stations, and where one or more places were vacant, a dozen will-

ing hands were waiting to take the burden of the work off those remaining, and never did help come in a better time; for, poor fellows, they were very much cast down, not through fear, not because they would not do the same thing at a moment's notice, but as the thought of one or another of those noble fellows lying still in death would come uppermost in their minds, the tears would trickle down their manly cheeks, and more than one were heard to say: "Why could it not have been me? I could have better been spared." Such was the general sentiment of the sorrowing remnant of the Brigade. Such was the sorrow and sympathy and the respect in which the Department was held that all business was suspended, and were you to visit the factories and workshops, and ask why everything was so still, the answer would be: "Gone to the firemen's funerals." Go into the wholesale house and ask why your goods had not been shipped, the answer would be that the young men had gone to the firemen's funerals. In fact, the same answer met you everywhere, "Gone to the firemen's funerals"—and a stranger entering the city and staying throughout the week would have left with the impression that Montreal was a city of death, lamentations, and funerals, for nothing was to be heard for four long weary days but the mournful notes of the *Dead March in Saul*, and the tramp of uniformed men as they wended

their way to the different cemeteries. To attempt to describe the funeral processions would be impossible; in fact, they could not be called processions, they can only be termed living masses of people wending their ways, neither knowing nor caring where they were going—enough that they were in some way paying a tribute to the honored dead—and hundreds of those who started out never reached the burial ground, for by the time the head of the line reached the cemetery the streets in the outskirts of the city were still crowded with anxious mourners trying to get a place in the line. To myself, and no doubt many others of the Brigade, it was a trying time, and for many nights after I awakened with a start from a troubled dream, with the sound of muffled drums sounding in my ears, and fancying that I was again toiling up the Mount Royal Cemetery road; and to this day if you mention the name of some of the fallen ones in the stations you will see a tear glisten in the eye of an old comrade, while in a melancholy tone he will utter, "Aye, aye, that was a fearful morning."

The funerals of the departed were very imposing, especially that of Choules, Higgins, Perry and Lynch. The bodies of the first three named were placed side by side on a platform erected for the purpose. Before placing them on the platform erected on the salvage waggon, as each arrived from their late residences, they were placed alongside of one *another* in No. 1 Station, for the purpose of giving

a chance to the thousands of sympathising friends to take a last look at those manly forms whom they loved so well in life and mourned in death. As the funeral took up its march by way of Craig street to St. James street, it was joined by that of Mr. Lynch, and never did Montreal witness such a gathering of a sorrowing multitude, young and old, rich and poor, and women with children in their arms followed the line of march for many a long weary mile. But why dwell on such scenes, or why harass the mind. Arrived at Mount Royal Cemetery, each was lowered into his last resting place. Their sorrowing comrades, who had sufficient nerve to refrain from betraying their emotion before, here seemed to have lost their fortitude, and tears fell unrestrained down their rough and honest faces, who had ofttimes before braved death with intrepid coolness.

The funerals of the remaining victims were only a repetition of those just recorded; and thus ended the week of funerals—funerals which have never known a parallel in Montreal, and which, let us pray, may never be repeated.

In the silent shades of the city of the dead, the slaughtered heroes were left with the most heartfelt regrets, amidst the whispering trees, the springing into life of nature in her most glorious forms, the singing of birds, and the quiet operations of the works of God's creation, to await the day of resurrection.

IN MEMORIAM.

SUNDAY, APRIL 29th, 1877.

Honor to the brave,
Who gave their lives to save
Our loved ones and our homes from fire!
In the murky depths of night,
In the awful solitude
Of sleep,
They keep
Sharp watches, and they brood,
With bended ear and sight,
Over the least alarm
Of harm,
And they never, never tire!
When the lurid flames shoot high
Veiling the starry sky,
And cinders fly like rain
Blown in a hurricane;
When the infant's cry rings shrill,
And the mother, kneeling wild
Upon the window sill,
With long hair disarrayed,
Calls out for manly aid
To save her burning child;
When strong men in their fright,
Circled by walls of fire,
Forget their mind and might,
And sink upon the floor,
As victims on a pyre,
To rise no more;
Who came like lightningsped,
With strong arm and bright eye,
With stout heart and cool head,
The fiery beast to tame,
And rescue from the flame
The souls that else would die?
OUR FIREMEN!
Honor and guerdon then
To heroes such as these;
Grudge not a paltry wage
To cheer their hours of ease,
Or to assuage
Their illness and old age.
And when their lives they yield
On duty's glorious field,
Shed the tribute of a tear
Upon their hallowed bier,
As I do here.

JOHN LESPERANCE.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

I would just here take the opportunity to tell my readers what I have found to be the simplest means of treatment in cases where people have become unconscious through inhaling smoke. In the first place, when you find a person suffocated, don't bring him too suddenly into the open air. If it is necessary to take them from the building in which the fire occurred, place a blanket or something similar over the head; if there are four men handy, place two on each side of the person, the two at the head grasping an arm each, and placing their arms under the arm pit, the other two grasping a leg each with one hand, and joining the other hands under the small of the back, march away to the nearest house as quickly as possible. There is no necessity for being too gentle with the person; a little shaking up will not do him any harm. I tried it once, and found it do an immense deal of good, and it was the means of curing a gentleman in the Brigade, who was in the habit of playing off dead. Some persons said it was to get his name up; others were unkind enough to say it was to get the brandy. No matter what the reason was, it was becoming so common that I determined to put a stop to it in some way,

and I was not long in getting a chance. A fire occurred one Sunday evening in a bedroom; the straw bed was on fire, and caused considerable smoke. After we had found the seat of the fire, I placed this man at the branch, and went along the passage to the top of the stair, and called for the water. I remained there for the purpose of getting the water cut off again, as the fire did not amount to much, and one dash would be enough. As soon as the water was cut off, I went back to the room again. As I was groping my way along the passage I tripped and fell over something. Calling for a light, I stooped down and found it was my smoky friend. Giving him a shake I told him to get up; it was too thin; that this thing was getting played out; but it was of no use—he was dead. By this time some of the other men had come with a light. I said, "That is J—— suffocated again, go and get some brandy." The boys laughed and said, "That will bring him around." One of them lay down beside him, and stretching himself out, said, "Brandy for two!" I said, "Never mind the Brandy this time, we will try another cure; I believe a little shaking up will do him good." So, grasping him by the legs, we pulled him to the top of the stairs, and placing him on the top step, gave him a push, and down he went—bump, bump. Before he got to the middle of the stairs, however, he grasped the

railing, and stopped short. I ran down after him, and putting my mouth to his ear I said, in a way he could not but understand, "Do you want to go the whole way? the brandy is at the bottom." He said, "All right, boss, that will do; I am better now." From that day until the day he left the Department (and I have seen him in some pretty tough places—for, although very susceptible to smoke, he was a good and brave fireman) he was never known to play off dead for the purpose of getting his brandy. But *revenons à nos moutons.*

As soon as you reach the house, lay the person down on his back—anywhere; some people will want to place him on a bed or sofa. Do nothing of the kind; place him right on the floor; you can get better around him. Let four men get down on their knees, each grasping a hand or foot, and after pouring about a tablespoonful of brandy and water down his throat, go to work and rub his hands and feet, also the calves of his legs. The two at his hands ought to take hold of his hand and elbow, and work them toward the breast. This is the most particular part of the work, and ought to be kept up without ceasing, occasionally pouring a little brandy into the mouth. If these persons should get tired, the other two ought to take their places. I have known us to work for over an hour, with the perspiration all over us, and after the onlookers had said

it was of no use, we have persevered, and have had the satisfaction of bringing many a poor unfortunate back from death to life again; and of the numerous cases that have come under my notice, in which I have had a hand during my long term of service in the Fire Brigade, I have only known one case in which the victim lost his life, and that was through no fault of ours. He lived three weeks in the hospital, and died from exposure while being conveyed to the hospital after he had left our care.

While dealing with this matter, I will just mention two cases that occurred very recently. The first was at a fire in the house of Mr. Burke, Alexander street; the other was at the burning of the Springfield House in May, 1880. At Mr. Burke's, his son and a boarder slept in the same bed, and, as usual, as soon as we reached the fire the crowd shouted to hurry up, there were people burning in the house. That shout to a fireman means *get in*, if it should be at the risk of your life. Well, we were not long in driving back the flames, which were enveloping the stairs leading to the room where the two men slept. As soon as possible we ascended, and groping our way into the room where we were told they were, we found Mr. Burke's son lying on his bed unconscious; the other, who had crawled into a clothes cupboard (no doubt thinking it was the door leading out of the room), we found in a sitting position,

quite dead. In the meantime we were attending to the young man who still had life in him. We had taken him out into the passage, and were giving him some brandy and water, when a young doctor arrived, and ordered him out of the house immediately. I said it would be better not to take him out too suddenly, as the night air was cold. He said, "That does not matter; get him out at once." I had not time to go back to the room to get a covering to put over him, so I took off my coat and threw it over his head. After we had taken him into a neighboring house, and had applied the usual restoratives, he came around; and while we were working with him the doctor and I had a long talk over the best methods to be used on such occasions. I gave him my views on the matter, at the same time wishing to get his. He said, no doubt, I had more experience than he had in such cases, as this was his first case. He said he would think the matter over, and as we had both to be at the Coroner's inquest the next day, while waiting our turn to be examined, we resumed the discussion, and I had the satisfaction of hearing him state that no doubt I was right, especially in the matter of not bringing them too suddenly uncovered to the air.

SPRINGFIELD HOTEL FIRE.

FEARFUL SCENES—ROASTING ALIVE—A LEAP FROM A FOURTH STORY WINDOW—FEARFUL SCENES IN THE HOSPITAL—DEATH OF ONE OF THE VICTIMS—OTHERS FEARFULLY MAIMED.

The other fire at the Springfield House was of a more disastrous nature, although there was only one life lost, and I cannot let this opportunity pass without giving my testimony to the heroic patience and fortitude of that one victim. At the time of the fire, I do not know how many were in the hotel, but they all escaped with the exception of three male boarders and two servant girls. It would take too long a time, and occupy too much space, to give one-half of the heartrending scenes that occurred at this fire. I will, therefore, confine myself to a few of them.

The fire originated under the stairs leading to the bedrooms, and cut off all escape in that direction. The two servant girls slept in a room on the top of the stairs, and nearest the fire. How they were awoke was told by the comrade of the unfortunate girl who lost her life. She said that the first thing she heard was a crackling sound on the outside of the door. While the room was filling with smoke,

and the heat was becoming unbearable, they jumped out of bed, and soon discovered that the house was on fire. They tried to get out by the door, but that was impossible; the only other avenue of escape was by the window, which they opened and looked down, a distance of forty or fifty feet (certain death). By this time, the fire was getting into the room, they got up on the sill of the window, and the screams of those two poor helpless creatures (as told by the few spectators who had gathered) was something they had never heard before, and never wished to hear again, for be it remembered that all this occurred in a very short time, and not only before the arrival of the Brigade, but before the general alarm had been sounded. The two girls caught hold of the framing of the window, and let themselves hang down at arm's length; thereby at least for a short time giving them a respite from, as it were, certain death, and poor things still hoping against hope that some one would come to their help; but, although help was very near, still it was too late. Just as the first detachment of the Brigade arrived, one of them dropped into the yard below, and was picked up and carried away. By this time the fire had got thorough hold of the room, and was belching out of the window, and the other poor girl actually held on until the flesh was burned off her fingers; if that

was not heroism, patience and presence of mind, then I do not know the meaning of the words; but even that was nothing to what I have seen that poor girl suffer afterwards in the Hospital. I had conveyed one of the injured in my waggon to the Hospital, and had placed him on a bed in one of the wards, when the two girls were brought in. I went at once to render assistance, and I wondered when I saw them so calm and patient that they had not been hurt more, but little did I know then the extent of their injuries. We lifted them off the stretchers on to the bed. The one that dropped first from the window moaned a great deal, but the other one never opened her mouth, but looked up at you with her large eyes, as if she would look you through. In lifting her into the bed, I had to take her around both legs, and I thought they felt very limp, and when the house-surgeon examined the sufferers and declared that the last one had both her thighs broken, and other severe injuries, I cannot find words sufficiently strong to express my admiration of the patient endurance of that noble but unfortunate girl. I called very often to see her after that, and there she lay with those large eyes looking at you, but no murmur, no complaint; and the nurses told me she was the same all the time up to her death. The other girl recovered, but was maimed for life.

We will now return to the scenes that occurred before I went to the hospital, or rather on our arrival at the fire, the too often thrilling words came sounding in our ears, "Hurry up, there are people burning in the building." I need not go over the same ground again, it was only another of the many battles that had to be fought, that quickly and determinedly called forth all the courage, dash and daring that is in heroic men, and Montreal can boast of not a few such men. To light a torch and rush for the stairs, each one vieing with his comrade who should be first to the rescue, up through the dense, black, stifling smoke, where the torch would not live, crawling on hands and knees, groping along from room to room. What is this? Is it a human being? Yes; but, dead or alive? There is no time to make an examination; you are becoming weak yourself; pick him up or drag him down the stairs. This work went on until the third and last of the victims were rescued from the burning building, and not a moment too soon. I will state in as few words as possible the experience of those three, as I received it from themselves. The first, John Boyle, was an Irishman, and a retired sergeant of one of H. M. Regiments, and had only arrived in Montreal from Ireland a few days, and had gone to the hotel for the first time on that night. He had not been long in bed when he heard the cry of

fire, but did not pay much attention to it at first; at last he heard a rushing through the house, and he got up and partly dressed himself, when he discovered that it was the hotel on fire. By this time the fire had gained considerable headway, and when he opened the door and tried to make his way to the stairs, he found he could not reach them. When he saw he was cut off that way, he returned to his room and shut the door, but had not been long there when he heard the flames roaring in the passage. He was about making for the window, when the flames came rushing in through the fanlight over the door, and as he was standing up they set fire to his hair. He grasped his hair in his hands and extinguished the fire, and placing his hands over his face he dropped on the floor, and remembers nothing more until he returned to consciousness in the hospital. His hair was completely burnt off his head, and his hands and face were burnt, especially his hands, which were burnt to the bone, and he will carry the scars on them to the grave. He remained in the hospital for some months, and I have never seen any person so badly burned and recover; but he was an Irishman and an old soldier, and no doubt that accounts for it.

The next was a young American named Charlie Walker, who was on his way from Toronto to his grandparents in Charlestown, Mass. He says he

remembers nothing. He went to sleep reading a book, and it was found on the pillow beside him. He was carried into the next house, and although he had only a small burn on his arm and another on his leg, his life was despaired of. This was one instance in which it took over an hour to restore consciousness, and one of the cases where the Brigade and even the doctor had lost all hope; but at last we were rewarded for our trouble by seeing him open his eyes and stare all around as if he was awakening from a dream; and a thrilling sensation ran through my veins as I saw the poor victim coming gradually back to life, that made me lift my eyes upward to heaven and exclaim, "Thank God!"

The last was a Scotchman, named Glen; he also had only gone there for the night, and had not been long in bed. He told me his story while I was visiting him in the Hospital. When I found out that all three were strangers in the city, and had no one to look after them or their things, although not compulsory or part of my official duty, still I considered it was my duty to my fellowmen to assist them in any way, especially as they were not in a position to look after them themselves. I therefore went to work and succeeded in recovering all their effects, for which they were very grateful. I also communicated with the grandparents of young Walker, and also procured him his passage home, as his

ticket had run out of date, and the letter of thanks I received from those good old people repaid me tenfold for all the trouble I had gone to. My purpose in relating this is to impress on everyone of my readers, especially the young, never to let the opportunity slip of doing a kindly service to the unfortunate who may be thrown in your way. You may not see the fruits of your kindly action at the time, but depend on it, that should you never see them they will be recorded above, and you will feel them in your conscience and heart as you journey through life. As I said before, the Scotchman Glen had not been long in bed when he was awaked with shouts of fire. He partly dressed himself, and gathering the remainder of his things, was about to make his way out of the house, when, on opening his door, and seeing the flames at the top of the stairs, he at once shut it again. He then went to the window, and opening it, looked down into the street. The flames were coming out of the windows below. He went back to the door again, but out in that passage was certain death; he went back to the window, there also was certain death; he did not know what to do at the time. I was conversing with him about how near he was to death, and asking him if he thought of it, and if he was in the habit of praying. He said yes, he never forgot his prayers, but on this occasion he prayed earnestly, and when he had given up

all hope of being saved from a terrible death, he dropped on his knees beside his bed, and burying his face in the clothes, commended his soul to God; and there is no doubt that that action was the means of saving his life, as the burying of his face in the clothes prevented, to a great extent, the smoke from entering his lungs. As it was, it took nearly half an hour before he was restored to consciousness. Before closing the account of this fire I will take this opportunity of placing on record my undisguised condemnation of the unwarranted and careless neglect of not providing proper means of escape from all hotels, factories and public buildings. That there are laws on our statute books, I am well aware, but they are, like a good many more of our important laws, *a dead letter;* and until some of those that are responsible are placed in the prisoner's dock and tried for the manslaughter of their fellow citizens, I am afraid it will ever be so.

ters, when death cut off his useful career. And Montreal never lost a better or a more faithful servant, the Fire Department a braver or more humane officer, and hundreds of citizens, a truer or kinder-hearted friend than Alexander Bertram. Had he lived until the present time, Montreal would have seen its Department on a different footing than it is. There was one thing about the Chief that was very amusing, and caused many a funny remark, and sometimes made the knowing ones shut one eye and give a long whistle.

The Chief, although a strictly honest man and above reproach in—I was going to say everything, but I can't—had one failing. Whether it was good or bad, I will leave it to my readers to decide. He thought as little of stealing a fire "wrinkle" as the New City Gas Co. do of putting out their lamps long before daylight or break of the morning, and it was quite amusing to see how the old man would draw out the opinions of others, and when you saw him scratching his head and setting his hat to one side, you might be sure that he had got a bite, and if you happened to suggest some good idea, you need not have been surprised if you saw it laid before the Fire Committee at its first meeting, and adopted as the Chief's latest invention. There is one thing I will say in his favor, in connection with this. He never received a cent for his trouble, but he often

THE LATE CHIEF BERTRAM.

paid out his own money to bring out the improvement, and many a thousand dollars has he saved for the city by his interest in fire matters. Chief Bertram, although not what might be termed a strict disciplinarian, was still a man who commanded great respect, and although he was slow to take offence, still it was as well not to give him too much. One of his greatest characteristics was his genuine goodness of heart. No one was ever known to stop Chief Bertram on the street and ask a favor and be refused, if it was in his power to grant it; and he would lift his hat as readily to the poorest beggar as he would to the Governor-General. Although of a quiet, unassuming nature, he was as brave as a lion, and did not know the meaning of the word fear. In fact, he was more careful of the lives of his men than he was of his own, and was well adapted to command a fire brigade. He was a fair mechanic in all its branches, had a good general knowledge of building, was a good judge of horses, and had just enough curiosity to want to find the ins and outs of every new building that was being erected, and did not think it beneath his dignity to tell some of the men under him to step around and see certain things that were going on—the different staircases and so on. This was as it ought to be and here again I must condemn those who neglect this important branch of a fireman's duty. There

are orders on the minutes of the Fire Committee books ordering such inspection, but I am not aware that any order has been issued to the men. No doubt the men are thought not capable of understanding such an order, or it would be condescending too much to stoop to give such orders. But I happen to know that there are not a few men in an inferior position in the Brigade whe know a thing or two, and if they were placed side by side with certain parties holding higher positions before three competent commissioners, such as are in New York, it might astonish the public to see the opinion of those three commissioners in print. One thing I am safe in saying, that they would not all receive first-class certificates. But I am not dealing with the present, I am referring to the past, so I will try and confine myself to it for a brief space. Another good quality of the old Chief was this:—He would place himself in contact with the younger men in the Brigade, and if he could not learn anything from them, one thing is certain, the young members, if they paid attention to his advice and recommendations, greatly benefited by them. When I entered the Department, as a permanent fireman, I watched closely Chief Bertram's mode of combatting fire, and other things that I thought would be of benefit to me, and if I have attained to anything in the shape of perfection in fire matters, or if I have gained a

name for excellence in the Fire Brigade, I have to thank the late Chief Bertram for my early training. I question if a better school could be found for turning out good firemen than the Montreal Fire Department, some twenty years ago, or a better professor than the late Chief Bertram was then, and had a younger man been placed in his position, with his ideas thoroughly engrafted into his nature, Montreal would stand, at this day, in respect to appliances, as it does in men—second to none on the continent. But, alas! such is not the case. Since I have intimated that I was about to sever my connection with the Department, in conversation from time to time with old admirers of the Brigade, the oft repeated words have been uttered, "Well, I do not blame you, the Brigade is not what it used to be—you fellows seem to have no life in you;" and well and truly were the words spoken. It was a sudden change from the warm, genial nature of the lively old man to the rigid, frozen icicle; and I now look back to the old times with pleasure when a man could pass his opinion and make a suggestion without the fear of bringing down on him the wrath of the great Mogul. In those good old times gone by, the Brigade was, as it were, one compact, happy family, with the old man as its father, and never had sons a more indulgent parent. I know there are some (but they are few) who will scoff at this, and

say, "Yes, yes; that was the way with the old man, he let the men have too much their own way." But those parties are mistaken, and they know it, for although Chief Bertram was kind and indulgent to his men, none of those men ever attempted to take advantage of that kindness, or, for one moment, dreamed that they could take liberties on that account. Oh, no! when the old man issued an order or word of command, it had to be obeyed, and it was obeyed with a free, spontaneous willingness that is hardly to be seen at the present day, and when the old man's command had gone forth there was no taking it back—there was no back down in him. He was ever careful never to give any man offence, and would never dream of taking a foul advantage of anyone. One of his mottoes was, "Do unto men as you would have men do unto you"—a grand principle, and one which, if it were carried out, would often be the means of avoiding a great deal of harm. Many a one about to utter some ill word about a friend or foe would pause and reflect, and see how little good it was going to do them, but what harm it might do those they were about slandering, the words would never be uttered, and consequently much evil averted. Well, some people may say, What has that to do with the past and present of the Fire Department? I say a good deal, for it was by giving such advice to the men under

his command, and acting up to such advice, that Chief Bertram had such a hold upon the hearts and affections of the men, and I have yet to learn that a better method has been introduced whereby a superior system of discipline has been obtained. Men must be treated as men nowadays. The age of slavery on this continent is a thing of the past. Men will not be treated like dogs any longer, and I have yet to learn that the lash will enforce that sense of duty in a man which is required for the proper maintenance of discipline. I am of the opinion that kind treatment will go a long way further, and in this age of enlightenment, in this nineteenth century, the possibility is that the lash might be applied once too often, and that the hitter might be hit. Some one may ask, "What is he driving at? All this is foreign to the subject." Not all, my friends. I have a motive in view, and, to be plain with you, I will tell you what it is. I have a great respect for the men of the Montreal Fire Department, and do not like to see them abused. I was one myself, and know all about it, and as a good deal depends on the harmony and good feeling existing between officers and men of the Brigade in doing their duty, each and every one of them in a proper and efficient manner, I thought that a few hints thrown out at this time would not be amiss, and might guide the next incumbent in office as to his line of conduct in this

respect; not that I would, for one moment, attempt to dictate to him, but he might take up this little book, when he has a few leisure moments to spare, and get a few fire "wrinkles" in it that might not do him any harm. While not wishing to be thought a prophet, I must speak plainly, and say it does not take much of a prophet to prophesy that a great revolution must take place in the Fire Department, and that very soon. The city has been very free from large fires for some time, but that is not going to last always, and the time may come that will see as large a conflagration here as in other cities. *Is Montreal able to cope with it?* NO, DECIDEDLY NOT! and well do some of the old experienced men in the force know it. That there are as good men in the Montreal Fire Department as in any fire department on this continent, no one can deny. I know that there are (and I know what I am writing about), but, with a few exceptions, they are a lot of raw recruits, or, as it might be better termed, a rabble without a leader. I am not the only one that has pitied them when called into action, for the manner they were handled, placing the men in such ridiculous positions before the public. There is neither discipline nor drill in the force, and I know that the men are eager for both. There are some good inventive heads in the Department, but they dare not show it, as it would at once be the signal for the

mandate to go forth, "Watch him, he is getting too smart and must be looked after; he might be looking for promotion and that would never do, he must be kept down at all hazards." These are plain facts, my readers, and I defy contradiction. Well, what is the result? Why, that man, in place of taking a pace to the front, and saying, I am full of duty and eager to show it, because I know if I do it well I will be applauded for it, takes two paces to the rear, and says, What is the use of a fellow puzzling his brains to invent anything in this Department, or trying to do his duty well? He only gets ill-will over it, and in place of being first on the list for promotion, why I will be the first to be "Boycotted." Such is the general feeling prevalent in the Brigade, and there is an undercurrent of dissatisfaction surging so fiercely that it would be well for those who are placed over such matters to see to its immediate remedy. I know well that these parties are kept in ignorance of the true state of affairs, that there is a beautiful system of sugar-coating over everything that blinds the eyes and deceives the mind; but sooner or later the beautiful white crust will drop off, disclosing to view the hideous deception within. There are gentlemen at the helm who cannot be deceived and actually will not be deceived much longer; in fact, the new moon has already peeped from behind the dull cloud, and

shown a small streak of light, which will grow brighter as it grows older, until at last it will show forth in all its brilliant array, and utterly dispel the present darkness. My readers will perceive that I am coming down to the present time, and may think I have not given sufficient attention to the past. But why dwell on the past? It is only taking up valuable time. Let us deal with the present, and try to get a glimpse into the future.

To thousands in this city it is of vast importance, more than they think. Those who have the interests of the city at heart must take part in this. Those who have large property at stake must look into it. Insurance companies, who have placed their all in the venture, must take an active part in the proper handling of the Brigade, and demand, in a respectful, but at the same time determined manner, that it should be placed on a footing in keeping with the size and growth of the city; and, more than all, those having little helpless ones depending on them must see to it; their voices must be heard in condemnation of the present dangerous penny-wise and pound-foolish system of running the Department. There are at the present time apparatuses in the Department that are only fit for kindling wood, and God help the poor unfortunate creatures who may have to depend on such unwieldly, half-manned, half-horsed machines, to rescue them from

a terrible death. I do not wish it to be understood that I am advocating extravagance in the management of the Brigade—quite the reverse. I am well aware that the great financial depression we have just passed through required great care in dealing with the public funds, and economizing was the order of the day, and rightly so; but, gentlemen, do not introduce unwise economy into the Fire Department; a more fatal policy could not be introduced than the cramping of the supplies and necessary equipments of the Brigade. The city can easily wait for twenty years longer, if necessary, for its park, the new City Hall still might have been embedded in the quarries at the Mile End, and many other things might have been dispensed with for the purpose of putting that most important branch of the Corporation service in an efficient state. But, I may be asked, who is to blame for this seeming want of appliances, discipline, drill and want of management in the Brigade? I answer, most emphatically, *the head of the Brigade.* Most people blame their representatives, and it would require an alderman to have pretty broad shoulders to stand the abuse that is heaped upon him; but bad as they are, they are not to blame in this matter. In the first place, they are not to be supposed to know what are the wants of the Department, unless they are made acquainted with them, and that ought to be done by the head of the

Brigade; and never, under any circumstances, should any person be allowed to bring matters of importance before the notice of the Committee without consulting the head of the Department—that is, always taking into consideration that that head is a competent person and well qualified to command the Brigade, make suggestions, carry them out, and place things before the Committee as they ought to be. Of late years, not only has this not been done, but there is more than one member of the Council who can testify that, in place of having suggestions put before them, and schemes for the advancement of the Brigade, they have had to press important matters themselves, and when they were asked where is the money, would reply, "Never mind, if such-and-such is needed for the proper running of the Department, the money will be forthcoming." That is a nice state of affairs. Should a man be wanted to take his place in the criminal's box in the Court of Queen's Bench for the slaughter of one or more persons through criminal neglect, who will be that person? I will here introduce the verdict as given by an intelligent jury after the burning of the St. James Hotel:—

THE VERDICT.

"That Mary Brennan and William Hyatt came to their deaths by accident by fire in the St. James Hotel, in the city of Montreal, on the morning of the 18th day of March inst. The

cause of such fire the jury are unable to determine. That Samuel George Hilditch came to his death through the want of proper precaution, and by the culpable neglect of the present and former Fire Committees of the City Council in not providing, and they might justly say without any means whatever of saving human lives in buildings of even moderate height, and unfortunately their want of precaution is the more criminal, as their attention had been repeatedly drawn to perfect and efficient apparatus, the usefulness of which and mode of construction were well known to them, and which it was the more imperatively necessary to obtain in consequence of the great height buildings have been erected in the principal parts of the city, in many of which hundreds of people are employed in the uppermost stories daily, and often far into the night, and in nearly every case the only means of exit is by a narrow wooden staircase. The jury cannot too severely condemn the present management of the Fire Brigade, although there are many excellent men in it who always perform their duty nobly, and often heroically. Still, it is apparent to the jury that there is an important want of management, want of discipline, and want of organization; and if it can be seen at this day that the apparatus, such as they have for saving human life, cannot be brought to the scene of a fire within three minutes' walk of their Central Station in less than thirty minutes, it is useless under such an organization to provide the improved 'fire escape' and other apparatus, as there would even then be disaster, and the jury would earnestly recommend the City Council to divide the Fire Brigade into three distinct corps: '1st. The firemen to concentrate all their strength and efforts to extinguishing the fire. 2nd. The men with the fire escapes and other apparatuses for saving human lives be made as complete as money and skill can possibly do. 3rd. The salvage men to save property from fire and water.' The jury also urgently call the attention of those in power to the manner in which buildings are very often constructed in this city. A man of great skill and decision of character should be

employed as inspector of buildings without delay. The largest possible salary would be as nothing compared to the great benefit the city would receive from such an official doing this duty as it ought to be done. In a city growing at such a rapid rate as Montreal is at present, the means of exit in buildings where large numbers sleep at night should be regulated by by-laws of the most stringent character. The jury cannot close this verdict without expressing their opinion that the St. James Hotel managers, Frederick Gerlken and Robert Acton, are guilty in neglecting their duty to those in their charge on the fatal night of the 17th inst. And that it is painfully evident the night watchman, James Callery, was not at his appointed duties, and he totally neglected in alarming any of the inmates but the manager, Robert Acton, and that the statements made on his solemn oath are not corroborated by a single witness.

"Alex. Empey, foreman; James Brown, Hector Munro, W. H. Barber, John Smith, H. O. Prowse, Wm. D. Smith, James Walker, David Tees, John Gardiner, William Carson, Dominique Rosaire."

And a more clear and practical verdict I have never seen, and, coming as it did at such a time and from such men, one would think that something would have been done, and some of the suggestions, or, in fact, all of them, been acted on. There is only one part of this verdict I don't altogether agree with, and that is where the jury condemn and lay blame on the Fire Committee. It must be remembered that those gentlemen are not placed there to make suggestions, or introduce the necessary apparatus into the Department. This can be shown in more than one way, but the principal one is they

are not firemen to begin with, and do not know, and are not expected to know what is wanted for the proper running of the Department. It is unfair to blame those gentlemen, and I am satisfied if there were at the head of the Fire Brigade a man in whom the Committee could place complete confidence, the Brigade would not be placed (as it too often has been), in a humiliating position. Just think of this, the boasted commercial city of this vast Dominion having to send a deputation to the city of Quebec to take patterns from their apparatus. The public will ask, Is that possible? Are there not brains enough in the Brigade for such a small matter as that? I say yes, it is possible, and was done. But there are brains enough in the Brigade, and at the time and before the deputation was sent to Quebec a model of a reel was gotten up by a member of the Department, which far surpassed the one for which the deputation visited Quebec to take patterns from. Anything invented by a member of the Brigade, however, must not be thought of. This is a matter the Fire Committee ought to look into at once, and throw their doors open to all inventors of fire apparatus, and when a member of the Department is a competitor give him a fair chance, and should he be successful not only reward him the same as a stranger, but protect him from the sneers and whims of his superiors in rank, although in-

feriors in knowledge. While speaking of inventions, I would like to draw the attention of the Fire Committee to the urgent need of adopting some standard fire escape for hotels and other buildings, where large numbers of people are housed, especially at night. This is a matter that has been agitating the public mind for a long time, and numerous inventions have been placed before the officers of the Brigade for the last eight years, but none seem to have given satisfaction. I am well aware it is a hard matter to decide on the merits of the different machines and schemes that are presented from time to time, each inventor claiming his as the best; but I will give the public as briefly as possible the benefit of my ideas of what is required for inside means of escape in case of fire. I will therefore ask my readers to accompany me to any hotel and imagine themselves sojourning there. One of the present contemplated escapes is, as far as I can understand, an outside ladder. I will not go into the subject of the ungainly sight such ladders would have to the public view. What I will endeavor to show is that such ladders will not give the means of escape which is claimed for them. Let the reader enter a hotel at night, and be shown to a room. He is tired and weary after a long day's journey, and takes it for granted that the hotel is supplied with those ladders, and that each passage window looking into the street is sup-

plied with one (and that is giving a large margin), and that notices are posted up in every bedroom in the most conspicuous place, where there would be no possibility of the stranger failing to see it, and that notice read something like this: "In case of fire, hurry out of your room and turn to the right as far as the end of the passage, then turn to your left, and at the end of the passage is the fire escape, outside of the window." I do not know if that is exactly what will be the wording of the instructions, but I presume it will be something to that effect. No more criminal instructions could be given. I suppose most of my readers are aware that most of those passages mentioned lead off from the stairs, and no doubt most of my readers also know that most of the fires occurring in hotels and other large buildings originate in the basement. I think I am safe in saying that at least seventy-five per cent. of them do so. Well, these fires generally smoulder for some time before they are discovered, and and by the time the drowsy night watchman is aware that there is a fire somewhere in the building, these stairs and passages are filled with stifling smoke, and if the night watchman is a plucky and experienced fellow, you may have a chance of being wakened before the fire reaches your door; but what with the man having to give the outside alarm, and the liability of his losing his senses, and the likelihood

of his making haste to save his little all, your chances of an early alarm in that quarter are small. But take it for granted that you are early wakened out of your sleep, in a strange place, and suppose you had read the instructions carefully before going to bed, and that you had remembered them all, and you were possessed of more than the usual quantity of pluck and presence of mind, you went to work as quickly as possible and partly dressed yourself, and proceeded to obey the instructions printed in your room: opening your door you found the passage full of smoke (to take the mildest view of it, it must be the case), do you think you would be able to reach the ladder mentioned as being along the passage to the right, then to the left? Never! and take my advice, do not try it. You will be sure to lose your way, your senses, and also your life. Most of my readers will see that I have placed this outside ladder in the very best light I could. There are numerous other places in hotels that would be far harder to reach those ladders from; but even let us suppose that there are two hundred rooms in the hotel, all occupied, and there are four fire escapes placed outside of the building (and that is a large number), that would be fifty persons to each escape. Now, let us picture to ourselves fifty persons making a rush for one of those ladders, and some of them women and children, and take into consideration

that the passage was full of stifling smoke, and not unlikely the flames roaring behind them, and it may be licking the very skirts of their dresses. How many out of that fifty would be rescued, do you think? Not one out of every ten. They would crowd each other, and while some would lose their hold in trying to out-do their neighbors, others would jump from the windows as the flames reached them. I have seen such scenes; I have been in those stifling passages; I have had the flames play all around me, burn the nap off my coat, and leave my eye-brows so short of hair that you would think I was a Chinaman. These are only a few of the many arguments that could be put forth to show that the outside ladder or stairs is not the thing that is wanted. Then, I may be asked, what *is* wanted? I reply, that the only safe and proper means of giving escape from the burning building is that every room ought to be supplied with its own escape, and that it should be deemed as necessary in each room as the bed itself. I here give room for a letter, written at the time of the burning of the St. James Hotel, and the editor's remarks:—

PUBLIC OPINION.

YESTERDAY MORNING'S LOSS OF LIFE.

To the Editor of the *Star*: Sir,—It is to be hoped that the sad accidents that have happened at the burning of the St. James Hotel will be the means of at once supplying our Fire

Department with a proper fire escape. Had there been such a thing instead of the miserable substitute attempted to be raised last night, no persons would have been injured, and the relatives and friends not now be weeping over their loved ones.

A fire escape that can be raised to the roof of the highest building should be obtained immediately, and a canvas bag attached thereto, and worked by an endless chain to bring down sick persons, and females and children, would be found very useful.

I would also wish you to urge in your valuable paper that all large houses, hotels and other buildings (where escape is possible to be cut off by the staircase being burnt) be furnished with a rope ladder, attached by an iron chain to a firm ring in the wall of the building near a window, furthest removed from the staircase, and the chain to be long enough to reach from the stanchion to the window, to preclude possibility of being suddenly burnt away. One such rope ladder should be placed on every floor of the building, so that the means of escape would be multiplied, and the harrowing scenes of this morning never again witnessed. By soaking the rope in a solution of alum or sea salt, it would be rendered nearly incombustible, and the expense would be a trifle.

Yours, etc.,

L. O. THAYER.

Montreal, March 18th, 1873.

[Not one, but at least three of the most improved fire escapes are needed. The Chicago self-supporting ladder, which is useful for both saving life and allowing the hose-men to fight fire to the best advantage, appears to be the best apparatus of the kind yet invented. One of these and two fire escapes of the pattern adopted by the British Society for the saving of life and fire, would perhaps meet the requirements of the city. The suggestions of our correspondent respecting escapes in hotels, etc., are well worth adoption.—Ed. *Star*.]

I heartily endorse the views taken by Dr. Thayer, and especially the remarks of the editor, and although Dr. Thayer may be astray in some minor matters, nevertheless his ideas were good at the time; but since, as I mentioned before, numerous escapes have been brought before the public. I have seen most of them and have seen them operated with, and took great pains to find out which was the most reliable, least complicated, and most serviceable, and I have no hesitation in pronouncing the Gregory Portable Fire Escape the best in every respect that I have been called on to inspect, and well adapted for persons travelling, as it takes up very little space, and there is no excuse in the world why our hotels should not have a supply of them for the proper security of their guests. I should certainly patronize the hotel which gave the best protection against fire.

What the Fire Brigade ought to have, as a life-saving apparatus, is of the utmost importance to the community, and the citizens of Montreal ought to raise their voices in utter condemnation of the criminal neglect that is allowed to go on from year to year in this important branch of the Department. True, since the burning of the St. James Hotel, the Skinner ladder has been purchased, but what is the Skinner ladder at present? It is only a thing of the past, and it was never properly manned; it has only

half the complement of men that the builders allow for it, and it is not to be supposed that they would advocate any more than was necessary. My readers will hardly believe the fact that half the time it is only half horsed, and it is a fact that cannot be denied that the so-called fire escape, as far as life saving is concerned, is useless, and the present head of the Brigade, no doubt, thinks so, as it is placed in such a position that it is impossible for it to be otherwise than last at the fire, and should a horse be short in any other station, the Skinner ladder is stripped of one to supply the want. This is a fact, little known outside of the Brigade, and certainly not known to the present chairman or he would not allow such a state of things to continue, as I have every reason to believe he thinks more of a human life than of a few paltry dollars. I would, therefore, recommend to him to put aside that cumbersome piece of lumber, the Skinner ladder, and at once place in its stead, and also in the other two sections of the city, the best and latest improved system of fire escapes; these the city are in all humanity bound to have, and not at a large outlay either. Let the growing city of Montreal wake up, put her right foot foremost, and place her Fire Brigade, especially her life-saving department, second to none on the continent. There is a system of fire escapes that could be introduced here, which would be of

vast importance to the city if adopted. That is, to place a good tamarac ladder, say forty or fifty feet in length, in all public squares, and hundreds of different places around the city, for instance, at every fire station. For it is a glaring fact that there is not a ladder of any description at any of the fire stations (unless hook and ladder stations), and if there is a ladder wanted to go into the first story window, it has to be brought from one of the ladder stations, or borrowed from some heavily taxed citizen. I am perfectly well aware there will be great opposition to this scheme, but let the Fire Committee take it into careful consideration, and if they think it is worthy of a trial, put it into use, no matter what might be said to the contrary by long wise heads. Don't let it be cried down, simply because I have suggested it. I am now a private citizen, and being, what I consider myself to be, an old and experienced fireman, who has given considerable thought to this matter, I think I have a right to have a voice in such matters. Remember, I do not wish it to be imagined for one moment that I am attempting to dictate to any one. All I want is that whatever suggestion I may make may be taken into careful consideration, and that the Fire Committee and officers of the Department will shut their eyes to the person making the suggestions, and give them a fair and impartial place in their thoughts and judgments, and

if found to be good and well pleasing to them that they will put them into practice for the benefit of their fellow-citizens, whose protectors they are; and if they should save one life, I have my reward, and I ask none other than to see the lives of my fellow citizens protected from that fiend, fire, as much as possible. I have seen as much of it as most men, and I have also seen precious lives lost that could have been saved by such a scheme as I am advocating. I will go a little more into details in this matter. These ladders could be placed in different parts of the city, and should be placed in such a position that they could be easily got at; they could also, if found necessary, be covered from the weather. This could be done at very little cost. In fact, I believe our enterprising city bill posters would put a respectable covering over them for the sole right of using the outside as an advertising board. These ladders are light and could be handled by two men, and I could give many instances where such ladders would have been of great service before the arrival of the Brigade ladders. I repeat that I expect there will be considerable opposition to such a scheme. And no doubt the everlasting "pooh, pooh" will be uttered, and the "Who ever heard of such a thing before? Why, there is not another city in the world which has such things!" Well, perhaps they have not; and, again, perhaps they have. These per-

sons have never been to any other city to see. But, be that as it may, and admit there is no such scheme in any other city, what of that? Is Montreal to remain a second or third rate city all the time? Ought it not, on account of the position it holds in the Dominion, be the leader in the improvements? Is it possible that the representatives of our Western cities will be allowed to pass us by, and go to Quebec for ideas in fire matters? But such is the state of the Brigade at the present time, that the spirited men in the Department have to blush when strangers visit their engine-houses, and acknowledge that the Brigade is ten years behind the times. Before leaving the subject of fire escapes, I wish to place on record my opinion of the English fire escapes, one of which was purchased for the city five years ago, but, for some unaccountable reason, was never put into use. I will admit that for our city the escape, as it was, was not well adapted; but, with a little alteration, I know of none that would be of so much advantage, in every respect, as the London fire escape of that date, and no doubt it has been improved since. The escape, as used in the City of London, is run by two or more men, in an upright position. That, of course, could not be done here on account of the telegraph wires, but it could be so altered as to make it of still more advantage in life-saving. In place of running it with men, it could

be placed with the fore or top part on a light truck, made for the purpose, and attached by a king bolt, to which a pole could also be attached, and run by horses. As soon as the escape, with its full complement of men, arrived on the ground, the king bolt could be withdrawn, allowing the horses, with the front truck, to walk away, and I think I am safe in saying that in less than ten seconds there would be a man at the top of the ladder. I question very much if the same thing could be done by the Skinner ladder, as it is mounted at present, in as many minutes. I do not want any of the *fancy* exhibitions of that ladder—that is, stripping everything off in the house, and deluding the public with a fancy display of quick time. That is doing anything but justice to either the citizens, who are depending on it for their lives in case of fire, or to the foreman in charge of the men under him. For instance, should a public display take place, to show some visitors the superior quality of the machine, all the usual stock of fly ladders, &c., is quietly removed before the ladder is taken from the engine-house, and at the sound of the whistle, up goes the ladder, and in a few seconds the men are at the top, amidst the plaudits of the onlookers, and next day a full account is given in the papers of the quick time made, and of the thousands of citizens who read the account, each would go to his bed with the impres-

sion on his mind that should a fire take place in the building he would see in less than so many minutes (according to distance) one or more of the brave firemen at his window, prepared to rescue him. But let us change the scene. It is now midnight, the ladder is to be found in its usual place; all the usual fixings are on it, the men are bunked up, the alarm strikes, the men rush to their places, hitch up as quickly as the surroundings will permit, and off they go; they reach the fire as quickly as horses can convey such a cumbersome machine (that is taking it for granted that they have not to go around to avoid some of the hills). As soon as they reach the fire, should the same individual be present who witnessed the fancy exhibition the day before, he will, no doubt, expect to see the same time made, if not quicker, on account of the appalling sight away up in the burning building, where is to be seen the distracted mother, with her helpless child in her arms, calling for help. The men hurry up as fast as they can, but things are different from what they were at the exhibition trial, the mountings that were quietly removed in the engine-house have to be removed in a hurry now, and although the brave fellows work with a will, and do their best, still it takes nearly as many minutes as it took seconds before, and all this time the poor woman is frantically calling for help. But help, although so near, is still far off, and the

poor victim, overcome with smoke and heat, or it may be that the flames have reached her, gives one last, despairing look at the cumbersome fire escape, as the men remove first one attachment and then another, and either sinks back into eternity or throws herself from the window to be picked up bleeding and maimed. All this time the strangers of the day before, the reporter with book in one hand and somebody else's watch in the other, are looking on at the drama that is being enacted, and wondering what is the matter with the men; not only blaming them for their tardiness, but no doubt attributing something else as the cause of delay, while the sole cause is the construction of the appliances placed in their hands, and a deception played off on a too confiding public. Another cause, no doubt, is, that about the only drill the men get is when things are brought out on such occasions to go through a farce with a half-mounted machine. The stranger leaves our city, congratulating himself that he is not the unfortunate person that was in that burning building, and having anything but a good opinion of our Department, and making the same remark that is often made—a fine looking lot of fellows, but sadly deficient in discipline and drill. The reporter leaves to write up an account of the night's adventures, and to condemn in strong language the cheese-paring policy, imbecility and incapability of the head of the Department.

Chairman and members of the Fire Committee, wake up and place our men in such a position that they need not have to blush when visited by strangers. Do not be deluded any longer with the false plaudits of the inexperienced. Practical men can see through the thin gauze, especially the visiting firemen; and, let me tell you in all honesty, that the Montreal Fire Department has not the high-sounding name it had some years ago; so put your shoulder to the wheel, and for the credit of our good old city, bring the Brigade up to a standing that, come what may, you will not be ashamed of it.

I will now ask my readers to accompany me into the interior of the fire stations, and take a look around. The outside of most of them are good and pleasant to look at, but I am sorry I cannot say the same for the inside. I have travelled a good deal, and visited a good many fire engine-houses, but I have never yet seen, in all my travels, worse furnished engine-houses than there are in Montreal, more barren and comfortless-looking places than some of the fire stations appear as you enter and take a look around. I have never seen an inch of carpet or matting, nothing but a few wooden benches and broken chairs, an old three-legged table, and those the property of one or another of the men. Why, go to the common jail and you will find matting on the floors as you enter, with, at

least, a good table, and chairs that will bear your weight. What is this in here? That is their bedroom, their sleeping apartment, fifteen feet by twelve, and in this small space (will it be believed) five men sleep. Think of it, ye citizens who rusticate above Sherbrooke street, with the balmy breeze from the mountain wafting the fragrant perfume of the flowers and trees around your peaceful dwellings; think, I say, of five human beings incarcerated in a small space, with low ceiling and small windows looking out on a dead wall, and surrounded by high buildings, where a breath of air never penetrates, or "Where a ray of sunshine never can be found." Let us take stock: Bedroom—five iron bedsteads, one gas pendant; sitting-room—one table, one gas pendant. This is all; not much chance for a ten per cent. insurance agent to make a living out of the Fire Department.

Compare with this the inventory of property in one of the engine-houses in New York City:—Dustpan, iron bedsteads, hair beds, cornhusks beds, straw beds, hair pillows, hair mattrasses, feather pillows, double-woollen blankets, single-woollen blankets, counterpanes, white woollen blankets, pillow slips, white counterpanes, bed quilts, cotton sheets, tables, chairs, desks, clocks, looking-glasses, yards of carpet, yards of matting, yards of oil cloth, wash stands, window-shades, pictures and frames, gas brackets,

gas pendants, pairs of scissors, door-mats, foot mats, rubber spittoon, earth spittoon and clothes horse.

Not only have those men to sleep in that close confined hole-in-the-wall, but alongside of the horses. Some people say it is healthy; that may be all very well, and as the Irishman said about hanging, "It is all right when you get used to it;" but I think most of my readers would like to be further away. Then they have to sleep with their clothes on the whole year round. This is a hardship that few of the citizens are aware of, and I would not be doing my duty to my comrades were I not to place their true position before the public. I said they had to sleep in their clothes the whole year round, and not only that, but they have to do duty twenty-four hours every day, or from the first of January of each year until the 31st day of December. The only time they have for themselves are four hours one evening in each week, and their share of Sunday; but it is understood that when on such leave they are to put themselves in such a position as, in the event of an alarm sounding, to be on hand. Comment is unnecessary. Another great evil in the Department is the want of proper means, or any means, of exercise in the stations; there is nothing in the world to keep the men in proper trim for the prompt and arduous duties they may be called on to perform at any moment. This is a want greatly

felt by the men, for I question if there is better grit and mettle to be found in any body of men to make good athletes out of than can be found in the fire departments, not only of Montreal, but of any city; and to see the spirit with which the boys go into the games which they are allowed to hold once a year ought to be enough to spur up the Fire Committee to put aside a small sum of money every year for the purpose of furnishing the Brigade with the proper implements and training. Money spent for that purpose would be well spent. I fancy I see some of the boys, after they have gone through a course of training, taking hold of the small fry that frequent the stations by the back of the neck, with their thumb and finger, gently deposit them outside of Corporation boundary; and I also fancy I see them walking along the street with head erect, chest extended, and a healthy glow in their cheeks.

One thing I am positive of, it would be the means of keeping good men longer in the Brigade, for it is death to a spirited young fellow to be hanging and lounging around. Do you think the men like it? By no means. They would sooner be working, and those that are in the custom of visiting the engine-house know well how the men grumble at having nothing to do, and how eager they are for a good fire to waken them up. It is customary for some people to remark that the firemen have nothing to

do. Well, I admit that they have no regular employment, but let me tell you, I would far rather work hard, say eight or ten hours every day, than hang around waiting for a fire twenty-four hours every day. Did any of my readers ever try it? If not, change places with one of the men for, say, one month, and see how you would like it. Remember, you are not to go out when you are wearied, and take a walk around. Oh, no, you must keep within hearing of the gong all the time, and if you should happen to have a Mary Jane or Sarah Ann (and if you have not got one you do not amount to much, and will never make a fireman), you cannot trot out to see her whenever you like. That is against the rules of the service, and next morning you will

> Be marched off to the *Green Table* in short time,
> Where no doubt you will be let off with a fine,
> But cautioned that if you again repeat the dose,
> You will have coupled your last length of hose.

I will now treat, gently and briefly, of the subject of officers' treatment and duty to the men. It is a very delicate matter to handle, and nothing in the world would have induced me to enter on the subject were it not that it may be the means of pointing out some of the errors that have crept into the Brigade, and, by giving a few hints in season, it may put things on a better footing, for we ought all to exclaim with Burns,

"O, wad some power the giftie gie us,
To see oursel's as ithers see us,
It wad frae mony a blunder free us,
An' foolish notion."

And as in most fire departments the officers rise from the ranks (and that is as it should be), they should remember that they were once in the ranks themselves. I would here urge this point strongly—let them keep that fact always before them, and it may be the means of preventing many an unpleasantness. Do not pass your men in the street as if they were dogs, simply because they have not gold lace or fur on their coats. Remember, it is not the coat that makes the man, any more than it is the gaudy cover of the book that makes the sterling reading within. Do not, when you enter the engine-house, look around as if you came in for the purpose of finding fault with everything, and look disappointed because you can discover nothing to pick a quarrel about, for the purpose of showing your petty authority. Do not imagine for one moment that you are striking terror into the men by the glare of that eagle eye of yours, or that you will cause them to tremble by that gruff, growling order. You may think they are shaking all over with fear. Not a bit of it. They are only trying to keep in the laugh until you go out, and then they give vent, some to merriment and some to contempt, while

the mimic of the station struts about in all his imaginary dignity, imitating your voice and actions, much to the amusement of his comrades. Do not treat with contempt any remark one of the men may make before strangers. Do not try to make the men feel as if they were presuming too much in your august presence. Remember you are not the Shah of Persia, nor the men slaves; they are firemen, and firemen, as a rule, think themselves as good as any other men, and while I do not advocate too much familiarity between officers and men, at the same time I would have the officer treat his men in such a manner as would command respect from them, and at the same time gain their love and esteem, for that is the only way in which a fire brigade can be successfully handled.

The next matter which I will deal with will be the present condition of the Brigade, compared with what it was five years ago, and leave my readers to judge if it is keeping pace with the times. Before doing so I will give my annual report for 1874 :—

REPORT OF THE SALVAGE CORPS FOR 1874.

To the Chairman and Members of the Fire Committee:

GENTLEMEN,—I herewith submit my second annual report of the working of the Salvage Corps, for the year ending 31st December, 1874, and I feel confident in saying that it has sustained the already good reputation it has gained for efficiency

and usefulness, but I am again compelled to call your attention to the urgent necessity of increasing the strength of the Corps; also to the want of more covers, as predicted in my last report. In the event of two or more fires following close on one another, they would leave the waggon empty. I need not give in detail the number of times the Corps has appeared at a disadvantage on this account, but will mention the fire at Messrs. A. W. Ogilvie & Co.'s, and the fire in St. Alexander street, the same morning, where a number of families were burnt out (some not insured), where the Corps were powerless for want of covers; also at the fire which consumed the oil and paint store of Messrs. J. McArthur & Son, when nearly all the covers were spread in the store of Messrs. DeLisle Bros. & McGill, where the firm acknowledged a large salvage, but had the fire gained headway in the other stores that were ignited, much would have been lost for want of covers. I may here state that the number of covers last year was thirty-three, but are now reduced from casualties to twenty-six, the others having been destroyed at fires. I would suggest the purchase of at least twenty more covers.

In conclusion, while thanking the Chief Engineer, officers and men of the Brigade, for the many valuable services they have rendered the Corps for the past year, I have much pleasure in stating that they are on the most friendly terms, assisting one another as the case requires, and to those of the Brigade who rendered the Corps special services on many occasions, I tender them my best thanks.

Hoping your Committee will give the few suggestions contained in the foregoing report your early attention,

I remain, gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

WM. ORME MCROBIE,

Captain Salvage Corps.

In connection with my report of 1874, I have only to say that in place of any of my suggestions being acted on, the equipment of the waggon has been going from bad to worse, and at the present time (1881) there are only twenty-two covers, and other things diminishing in proportion; and after the fire in the store of Cushing Bros., in December, 1880, the waggon remained forty-eight hours without a single cover. That is keeping pace with the times with a vengeance. But what of the other apparatus of the Brigade? Through the exertions of Alderman Hood and his Committee, there have been some new reels placed in the Department, also a ladder-waggon, and the public may depend on it that now that his eyes are opened, as well as some of the Committee, the Brigade will be put on a better footing than it has been for some time. But, although those active gentlemen of the Committee are doing a great deal of good, there are still things going on and hid from them that are impossible for them to rectify unless they pay a personal visit to each station and interview the foreman in charge. What would be the consequence, do you suppose, were the Windsor Hotel to take fire and get any headway? It is well known that the water supply is too weak to have any effect; in fact, by the time a sufficient number of streams would be brought to bear on it that the extent of the building requires, I

question very much if the water would do more than come out of the nozzle. But we will be told that the city has three steamers, and two of them very powerful. Well, I admit that, but in what condition are those two powerful steamers. I will tell you. They are lying in their houses in their summer gear, therefore there is no need for me to tell my readers that they might as well be at the North Pole, as it would be simply impossible for them to be conveyed from where they are located to the scene of action, through such roads as we have had this winter, and with such horses as are detailed off to draw them; therefore, so far as the extinguishing apparatus of the Fire Department is concerned, the beautiful Windsor Hotel, the boast of the Dominion, would be burned to the ground. I don't believe that the Fire Committee are aware that such is the state of affairs. Permit me again to interrupt my narrative, by placing before you the opinions of the press on a matter of vital importance, when, with a few words of explanation, I will leave the matter in the hands of my readers to pronounce judgment :—

AN INGENIOUS AND BENEFICIAL CONTRIVANCE.

In the course of the past summer Mr. McRobie, the energetic captain of the Salvage Corps, made a tour through several cities across the border, and on his return, improving upon ideas which he had obtained during his trip, perfected an apparatus which is calculated to excite some surprise, if not astonishment

when first witnessed in operation, and which fairly promises to be one of the most marked benefits in connection with the entire Fire Brigade of the city. Briefly, when the alarm is sounded from the central office at the City Hall upon the gong in the station, the clock is stopped, marking the hour to the second, the horses attached to the reel and salvage waggon are unloosed and taught by careful practice to rush to their respective places; the doors are opened, and if it be night the gas, which has been kept barely lit, not only in the station proper, but in the rooms occupied by the captain and the guardian above, are turned on to their full strength. This sounds much like a tale from the Arabian Nights, but is, nevertheless, an actual fact, and, moreover, the mechanism by which this result is obtained, is, happily, as simple and inexpensive as ingenious, although it would be difficult to explain it without personal inspection. In fine, a small leaden ball is placed in the gong in such a position that when an alarm is sounded it drops simultaneously the end of a balance, this movement releases a heavy weight below, which, descending, acts upon wires which communicate with the rod to which the horses are fastened, the doors and the gas meter attaining the result mentioned in addition, by stealing a bite, as it is familiarly termed. The captain recieves in his private rooms the alarm as it passes to the operators at the City Hall. If at night, he is up in an instant, and pulling a connecting rod, sets the above apparatus immediately in motion; for day time alarms have been contrived, by which the men, if they are privately or otherwise notified of a fire, can, from several parts of the station, effect the same thing. In fact, the apparatus is most complete, and should be adopted as far as practicable in all the stations in the city. It was inspected by Alderman Loranger, chairman, Aldermen Nelson, Rivard and Hood, members of the Fire Committee, yesterday afternoon, and pronounced most satisfactory. Its general introduction is already proposed. It is obvious that the object is to gain time—a point of the most extreme importance in connection with fires—and that it is of service in this

respect is proven by the fact that a short time since the reel of No. 2 Station reached a fire in the western part of the city almost simultaneously with the reel of the Wellington Street Station. The apparatus was on Wednesday placed in the St. Catherine Street Station, the men bearing the expense. Mr. McRobie has been obliged of course to spend a good deal of money relative to this matter from its incipiency, but is it not to be presumed that he will be a loser by conferring so practicable a benefit upon the city. A healthy rivalry has also recently grown up between the men of the various stations regarding promptitude at fires, etc., and the indirect advantages of the new scheme promise to be very considerable.

Will my readers believe that that same apparatus was ordered out of the station, not two months ago, and, as far as I know, for no other reason than that the horses, in attending to the morning and noon calls of the gong, were cutting up a few soft wooden planks. I have nothing more to say on the subject. And again the interior of the engine-houses are of the most ancient description, and I would advise the Committee to have them altered to suit the times. The smallest town in the United States is far in advance of Montreal, and if the officers of the Department would take the trouble to visit any of the border towns, they would blush for shame (that is, if they could muster up a blush) when they returned and looked at the "one-horse" style of running the Department. The Committee have a good chance at the present time of showing what they are made of. There is a new station being

built. Now is the time. Do not let any old fogyism prevail, and if there are not brains enough in the east end of the City Hall to carry out the latest improvements, let the Committee get some one with brains to superintend the matter. Another thing: Why are our poor horses allowed to suffer so much pain and agony in the summer with chapped and bleeding necks, when a few dollars will purchase the swing harness, which will not only be the means of the machine getting out quicker, but will be a blessing to the poor suffering animals? See to it at once, Mr. Chairman, and I will pledge my word that when you visit No. 2 Station, that 'cute little creature, Rob Roy, will give you such a warm welcome that it will make your heart glad. Do not forget the swing harness, the poor horses require it. If you had seen them suffer as I have seen them, you would have it in use before the hot weather sets in.

The controlling of large fires is a subject of vast importance to the whole community, to every village, town or city, not only in this country, but all over the known world. It is a matter that is not easily explained, and it is hardly possible for the writer to find words in which to properly explain his ideas of what he thinks is the best method of successfully combating large conflagrations. It is seldom that two fires are alike, and fires do not

come just as you would wish them. It is impossible for the chief of a fire brigade to have his plans all laid. It is quite different from the commander of an army; he has all his plans laid before him, and has placed his subordinates in their different positions, and either awaits the onslaught of his opponents, or makes the advance himself, with the whole field before his view, knowing the strength of his opponent, and, no doubt, to a great extent, their tactics. How different with the fire brigade. Should they go to bed laying out all sorts of schemes how they would attack Smith's store in the event of its taking fire, be sure it will be Jones' uptown building, as unlike in construction, position and locality as possibly could be. With the army, also, it is quite different. In fact, when such battles are to be fought, should the commander think that he is outnumbered, or that his position is not what he would like it, or numerous other good reasons why he should decline to meet the foe, or why he should make an honorable retreat, he might adopt as his motto,

> "He who fights and runs away,
> May live to fight another day;"

for, I believe, it is generally considered that a good retreat is better than a shameful defeat. Again, how different with the battles the fire brigade are

called on to combat. No timely warning is given; no chance to say a good-bye to your wife; no time to imprint a farewell kiss on her lips, and tell her, if you should not return, to be kind to the little ones; no time either to take one fond look at those innocent little ones whom you love so dearly; no time to drop on your knees and ask for God's protection as you rush forth at the call of duty to conquer or die.

The first thing required in combating large fires is thorough discipline. Without that no brigade is in a position to do its duty. No city is safe from such fires, and it is false security for a city to think that because they have no large conflagrations, it is impossible to have them. Other large cities have been deluded with such false security (cities, too, which were far ahead of Montreal as regards the fire department), who have had bitter cause to regret that they did not pay more attention to the details of their fire system. Each permanent fire brigade, such as is at present in Montreal, should have at its head a man capable of instructing the men in all the various branches of fire fighting. He should be able to give lectures on the most recent inventions of fire apparatus, and the best system of handling them, and to qualify men for such a position I would say that there ought to be a regular school for instruction opened, and regular days or hours set apart for

such instruction. I do not mean that such instructions would take the form of school going, but what I maintain is, that there ought to be sufficient men in the department, according to its strength, so qualified as to give such instructions by visiting each station once a week, or oftener, if possible, and putting the men through a regular course of training and drill. The chiefs of districts and foremen of stations could be called together at some central point, and after being taught themselves, be compelled to teach their men, and then the regular instructor could pay a visit occasionally to inspect and see to what perfection the men had been brought, and if the foreman was attending to his instructions. If this suggestion was adopted in Montreal, I have every reason to believe that it would not only be the means of bringing about a better understanding between officers and men, but would be the means of placing the department at the head of the list, as a well-trained fire brigade (which it is not at present, nor ever will be under the present management), a fact that can only be found out by making a few inquiries into the present state of the Brigade. There are plenty of men in the Department who could enlighten the public, and open their eyes. Perhaps my readers may think or say that this has nothing to do with combating large fires, but I maintain it has everything to do with it. If a brigade is to be

made as nearly perfect as possible, we must begin at the foundation, for if the root is rotten you cannot expect the branches to bear fruit. This may be considered hard language, and I admit it; but I would not be doing my duty to the citizens of Montreal did I not speak out in plain language. One great mistake made by chiefs and their assistants in fire-fighting (at least, when I have had an opportunity of watching) is their eagerness to put the whole force into action because the whole building is in a blaze. This is a fatal mistake, and has been the cause of nearly all the large fires, for I maintain that after the fire has got hold of the building to such an extent that say at least four or five streams will not put it out, it is certain that double the number will not do it; therefore, my theory is that the sooner that building is down the better, and the sooner the danger to surrounding property is over. Another great mistake is not detailing a sufficient number of men to watch the surrounding buildings. This was well illustrated at the burning of the St. Andrew's Church in 1869. At that fire Chief Bertram detailed myself with two others to watch the houses on Palace street, also the little church on the hill, and it was well he did so, as they were on fire more than once; and, when the steeple of St. Andrew's Church fell, we had hard work preventing the building from taking fire. Unfortunately, the same pre

caution was not taken on the east side of the hill, and the consequence was that the Unitarian Church took fire and was gutted, and while all sorts of rumors were going the rounds about the cause of the fire (most people attributing it to incendiarism), I am fully convinced that the sole cause was the intense heat from the other fire setting fire to the wood work under the eaves, for it must be remembered that it does not require a blaze to ignite, nor does it require the wood work on the outside to be on fire to convince an experienced fireman that there is danger within, and that the building is on fire. I will illustrate another fire, when, had it not been for great care and watchfulness, the whole of that part of the business portion of the city west of St. Peter street would have been consumed, and where it would have taken the city years to have regained its former position. I refer to the fire in the wholesale stores of Nelson & Sons, where a very high compliment was paid to me by Mr. Alfred Perry, a noted authority on fire matters. In a letter to the press on the bad management and discipline of the Fire Brigade, while giving me one of his "sly pokes" in the ribs, he at the same time was giving me a "lift" as an experienced fireman. In his letter he says: "What would have been the consequence had Mr. McRobie been away up west trotting steam fire engines round the country?

Why, the whole of the business part of the city west of St. Peter street would have gone to blazes." (Thanks, Fred.) I need not go into details of how that fire was fought; I will only mention that from the moment I arrived on the ground I saw there was no use in trying to save the building, and regardless of what others were doing, I went to work at once and had streams placed in each building on the west side, and although the buildings were on fire numerous times, I think I am safe in saying that the insurance companies had not one hundred dollars to pay for damages by water on this occasion. I was greatly assisted by ex-Ald. Garth, by whom I was highly complimented on that occasion, and again at the large fire which occurred in Nazareth street, 1877, shortly after the St. Urbain street massacre, and a better fought fire I have seldom seen, when the half of the Brigade were *hors de combat*, and the Chief confined to his bed, for here let me remind my readers that although the Brigade, assisted by numerous citizens, did their very best, and fought manfully, it would all have been to no purpose, had it not been for outside assistance. It is a hard thing to acknowledge, but it is truth, and I am writing truth. The credit of stopping that fire was certainly due to Chief Benoit, of St. Henri, for his prompt and manly answer to the call on him for help, especially when we take into consideration

that the Montreal Fire Brigade had received orders not to go to his assistance. Few of the Brigade could distinguish between Montreal and St. Henri, so close were the buildings to one another, and the Chief made an attempt after that in committee to place me in a ludicrous position, by criticising my actions, it having been I who sent for outside assistance. He also asserted that had he been there, there would have been no need for other help. (Poor man.) Ald. Childs, having been at the fire, quietly intimated that the less said about fire management the better. On this occasion, had not the outskirts of the fire been well attended to, even with the assistance we got, the whole of Griffintown would have been a thing of the past. I saw more good work done that night with buckets of water, by the citizens, than I ever saw before or after, for, be it remembered, the water was so weak that it would not throw a one-inch jet fifty feet from the nozzle from some of the hydrants. Another fire occurred which clearly demonstrated to my mind the great necessity of getting outside of the fire, as it were, to fight it. This fire occurred in the lumber factory of Ostell & Co., St. Gabriel Locks, in June, 1870.

TREMENDOUS CONFLAGRATION—IMMENSE DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY—2,000,000 FEET OF LUMBER BURNT—FIFTY FAMILIES LEFT HOMELESS—LOSS UPWARD OF $500,000.

THE SCENE.

Last night the vicinity of St. Gabriel Locks was the scene of one of the most terrible fires, and one involving a greater destruction of property, than any that has occurred in this city—probably since the great fire of '52. It is only a few days since the city was startled by fires occurring at both ends of the city at the same time, of unusual magnitude, and involving in each case immense loss, but these are thrown entirely into the shade by the conflagration of last night. The city was illuminated by it from one end to the other. Between eleven o'clock and day-break one might have seen to read almost anywhere within a radius of three miles of it. The scene on the spot was indescribably grand. After the first half hour the flames spread from one point to another with almost the rapidity of a prairie on fire, and, assisted by the high wind which naturally sprung up, lashed themselves into redoubled fury every moment, as though to seek a terrible revenge for the close subjection under which they are usually kept here, and leave behind them another proof of their awful power. Water seemed but to add fuel to the flames, and the utmost efforts of the firemen could do no more than to hang as it were on the outskirts of the fire, like a band of guerillas on a flank of an invading army, so as to cut off the stragglers from the main body, and retard its progress as much as possible. But even in this way a vast amount of good might have been effected, but for the fact that anything like a stream of water was not to be had, some tanks sending forth nothing but a compound of mud and water, which did not reach ten feet from the nozzle of the hose. Nevertheless, the men worked like demons, pulling down here and pumping there, now cutting off the progress of the flames in one place, and now another, but ever surrounded by fire of such magnitude

and fury that one would rather have supposed them to have belonged to the fabled tribe of Salamanders than any modern race of beings. At the same time the neighborhood of the fire was black with people in every direction, as far as the eye could see. The whole (male population at least) of the city appeared to have turned out to witness the spectacle, or assist in saving property. Hundreds of young men from the city labored with indefatigable courage in carrying water, saving furniture, and what not, regardless of their highly polished boots, stand-up collars and good clothes generally, anxious only to do what they could to assist in repelling the enemy and saving from his power. Every house-top which stood in immediate danger had its quota of people endeavoring to keep the sides of the building wet by dashing on them buckets of water, which were handed up to them, and who, as seen from a distance through the lurid glare of the fire, seemed more like inhabitants of a lower world dancing with fiendish delight at the spectacle than human beings.

To those unacquainted with the locality a short description of it may be serviceable. The St. Gabriel Locks are reached by Seigneurs street, which runs from St. Joseph street right across the canal, and into what might be called the Village of Point St. Charles. On the left-hand side of Seigneurs street, just as you cross the bridge over the canal, is (or was) the saw and planing factory of Messrs. Tucker & Son, surrounded by vast piles of lumber of every description. Down the canal from this, a short distance, and on the same side, is Redpath's Sugar Refinery; while following along Seigneurs street are the lumber factories of J. Ostell & Co. and Shearer Bros. On the right-hand side of Seigneurs street again, commencing at the canal, is Mocock's axe and edge-tool establishment, followed by lumber yards belonging to some of the above factories, until St. Patrick street is reached, when commence stores and private dwelling houses, and the village proper of Point St. Charles. The general outline of the place may be stated as follows: Lumber and lumber

factories up both sides of Seigneurs street, from the canal to St. Patrick street, followed by lumber still on the left hand, and stores and dwellings on the right from St. Patrick right across Manufacturers to Richardson streets, all of which was completely desolated by

THE FIRE,

which broke out about ten o'clock. A few minutes after ten the alarm was sounded from Box 61, Redpath's Sugar Refinery, about which time the reflection could be seen in the centre of the city. When the Brigade arrived on the ground it was found that the fire had broken out in the planing factory of Messrs. Tucker & Son, which was already enveloped in flames, and was spreading rapidly, burning furiously, owing to the inflammable nature of the material it encountered. In a few minutes no earthly power could stop its progress. Into Ostell's factory it burnt and spread around among the lumber piles in the vicinity in a short time. Tremendous efforts were now made to save Mocock's axe and edge-tool factory on the other side of the street, which, fortunately, were successful, for had that gone the fire could have swept triumphantly up the canal, levelling factory after factory, until it reached the rope walk beyond. This danger, however, was averted partly by the fact that the wind for the most part blew away from the building, partly because the building was, to a great extent, fire-proof, and partly by the quantity of water which was poured on to it. The fire, nevertheless, succeeded in reaching this side of the street a little higher up, where, as has been stated, more lumber yards were situated, and swept on with redoubled vigor, creating a wind which, at times, almost amounted to a hurricane. At this point a creek crosses the street, which is spanned by a bridge, and here the scene at one time was sublimely grand. The creek on either side of the bridge was literally a river of fire, between which the firemen and others had to pass and repass across the bridge in the execution of their task, a feat only to be accomplished by

having water played on them from the hose as they ran, to keep them from taking fire. From the corner of St. Patrick and Seigneurs streets the flames spread with incredible rapidity, leaping from house to house, and burning with such fury that at one time it was feared the whole surrounding neighborhood would be destroyed.

It was at this time that I and two or three others of the Brigade nearly lost our lives. We had been fighting the fire in the lumber pile on the north side of St. Patrick street, but it was of no use; the fierce flames were driving us back inch by inch, and I saw it was of no use to try to stop the fire in that place, so I said to one of the chiefs that we had better back out, or we would lose some of our hose. He did not think so; at least, I got no satisfaction; but, as I predicted, down came the fire on us with a vengeance, sweeping everything before it, lifting whole planks and boards, and whirling them in the air. When I saw the fire gaining on us so rapidly, I made an attempt to have the hose hauled out of the reach of the heat, but it could not be done. I uncoupled a length and started off with it, when, all at once, snap it went. The heat had burnt it through about twenty feet behind me. I then thought it time to look out for myself, and it was well I did so. There was a high fence surrounding the lumber, with a gateway in the centre. I made toward that gateway on St. Patrick street as fast as I could, the flames roaring behind me, and before I had

reached the street the intense heat had set fire to the fence in front of me. I was nearly giving up in despair. The heat was intense, my coat was burnt to a crisp, and the flesh on my back all blistered, and had I not luckily ran straight for the gateway and got out in the street, there would have been nothing left of me but a heap of ashes. As soon as I got out on the street I took a look around me, but before I had time to look far the houses on the south side of St. Patrick street were on fire. By this time things were beginning to look bad. We had lost a lot of hose, the Brigade were getting played out, and the fire was having it all its own way. I said to one of my men, "This will not do, we must get outside of this fire." I therefore gave orders to pick up all the hose that could be found lying around, and while this was being done one of the chiefs asked me where I was going. I told him I did not know exactly, but that something had to be done to stop this fire. So, after I had packed up about three hundred feet of hose on the reel, off I went away ahead of the fire, brought up in front of Shearer's saw-mill, spun off my hose, and commenced playing water all round on the lumber piles. Some of the people remarked that I had lost my senses, but I told them to look out for their little all, as the fire would soon reach them (had the fire been stopped before it reached me, my reputation

as a fireman was gone forever), and, sure enough, it was not long in coming. We stood as long as the heat would allow us, and we then took shelter in Shearer's mill, took a door off its hinges, cut a hole in the centre, placed it against one of the windows in the centre of the building, stuck our branch through the opening we had made, and played away right and left. This was one of the most severe fights I have ever witnessed. The mill was literally surrounded by fire, and it was a time of fearful suspense to all in the mill, for had we not succeeded in keeping the mill from taking fire we would have been roasted alive, as it would have been impossible for us to have lived outside of the building; in fact, as it was, we were very nearly roasted in the mill, and we had to haul in the branch occasionally and drench it with water. To give you a slight idea of the intense heat that was in the building, I may mention that there was a large belt saw hanging on the wall forty feet in circumference (I believe the largest one in the country at that time), and it was so hot that it could not be touched; but, heat or no heat, we stuck to our posts, which prevented the fire from crossing the street at this point, and by that means saved an enormous amount of property. Again I was complimented by that veteran fireman, Alfred Perry, for what he considered a masterpiece of fire fighting. I could go on describing many

other scenes, where it could be clearly demonstrated that one of the great evils in fighting large fires is in not paying sufficient attention to the surroundings of the fire, but I will content myself by drawing the attentions of chiefs, or others having command at fires. As soon as you see on your arrival that the fire is likely to spread, detail at once one or two of your best men to watch the surrounding buildings. Chiefs may say, We know all about that; but let me tell some of them there is no harm in cramming it into them. I have seen some of them lose their senses to such an extent that, when they had to deal with a large fire, they would have been none the worse for having a printed form in front of them. Never be too proud to learn.

———

BUNK-ROOM YARNS.

"FAUGH-A-BALLAUGH" AS A YARN SPINNER—BULLY WEBSTER'S LAST WORDS—"TELL MY MOTHER I DIED VICTORIOUS."

I place before my readers a few of the harmless incidents and innocent tales that have come under my notice with considerable pleasure, as some of those incidents and tales, and the characters figuring in them, recall happy times gone by, and at the outset I will take the opportunity to put my readers straight on certain points. If some of the yarns should appear rather "tough" and hard to digest, you are not supposed to question their veracity, coming, as they do, from an old hand-pump fireman, whose education was never considered complete until he had taken his degree as a first-class "delineator of fabrications."

I will therefore introduce to my readers one of these. A gentleman known as "Faugh-a-Ballaugh," holding a first-class certificate (in fact he held nearly all the certificates in the Company). Well "Faugh," as he was called, was a true specimen of the old volunteer fireman, generous and manly, but boisterous and swaggering, and could throw out more wind and chaff than any steam furnace yet invented. He

was ever ready to peel off his coat and go in. Faugh's principal peculiarities were a tendency towards the sensational and exaggerated. Faugh could magnify a mole hill into a mountain, especially when under the spell of the fire alarm. If he happened to tramp on a small dog's tail, he was sure to represent it to the Company as a large Newfoundland dog, and if nothing else stirring turned up at the time, it would be an elephant before he was through with it. Faugh was never known to attend a fire and not meet with some adventure or have a narrow escape. He has been within an inch of being killed hundreds of times, but I do not remember that he ever got a scratch. A great dodge of Faugh's was to enlist the sympathy of the crowd that always attend a fire, looking for information. As soon as he would catch sight of a number of these inquisitive individuals, he would go around behind them (having previously bespattered his coat with mud and his face with the burned coals from the fire) and let out a "whew!" in such a sonorous voice, that it would make the crowd jump, no doubt thinking that the walls were coming tumbling down about them, and as they would turn around to make off they would be confronted by Faugh, in a dreadful state of mind, wiping the sweat off his manly brow with the dirty sleeve of his coat—by no means improving his appearance—and, if it was possible for him to

muster up a pimple on his face, there was to be seen a little streak of blood trickling down his cheek, which would at once enlist the sympathy of those tender-hearted citizens who doted on the noble protectors of their lives and property, and would bring forth from some of the most timid ones, "Are you hurt, sir?" "Hurt!" Faugh would say, feeling himself all over and straightening himself up, "well, no, I can't say that I am much hurt, but I tell you what, gentlemen, it was touch-and-go with me that time. I never was so nearly killed before—very nearly being a funeral—the boys came very nearly having to put the little piece of crape on the left arm, and toll the old bell again." Such expressions and many more would come thundering out of Faugh's mouth in half the time I am taking to write it. At last, some one would get in a word, and ask him, "How did it happen, Mr. Fireman?" "How did it happen? Come, and I will show you," and off Faugh would go, to where he had previously placed a large stone or burned beam, followed by as many as had the necessary amount of curiosity to overcome their fear. I need not tell you that there were always two or three women to be found in the crowd, and as Faugh would be explaining how it happened, pointing to the stone or beam, and looking up to the top of the building, he would say, "Do you see that stone? Well, that came right down from the third or fourth

story (as the case might be) and had I not jumped to one side I would have been a dead man." "Goodness! Gracious!" would come from some sympathizing female in the crowd, "just look what a narrow escape the poor man had, and just think of his poor wife and children." "I don't think he is married," would come from some dimple-cheeked damsel, having an eye to matrimony (for the girls were very fond of the red coated fire laddies). "Those noble fellows do not receive half remuneration enough for the risk they run," would come from a seedy-looking individual in the outskirts of the crowd who never paid a cent of taxes in his life, and no doubt was looking around for an eye-opener. Just then a shout would come from some one to look out! the wall was coming down, so the crowd would scamper off, leaving Faugh to concoct some new adventure. This was only a poor sample of some of Faugh's dodges to raise a sensation, and whenever I would see a gathering of people around a fire after it was over, I would make up my mind that Faugh was in the centre of them, relating another of his hairbreadth escapes.

As I mentioned before, he was a great "magnifier." If he had tripped over a match, in running to a fire, it was sure to be a large stick of cordwood; if he ran within three yards of a small boy he was sure to have come into contact with a man weighing

three hundred pounds and knocked him into the middle of the street. The fleetest runner in the Company was never known to have outrun Faugh. If he was spinning a yarn about a race he had with some of those who were known to be the best runners in the Department, and if he was brought up sharp, and told to "draw it mild," he was sure to get out of it some way; he would say, "Hold on, boys, until I am through; I do not mean to say that I ran as far as he did, but I reached the fire before him. I tell you what, boys, I euchred him badly that time," and he would go on to describe how the fast runner would have to go around two or three blocks to reach the fire, while he would dart into the hall-door of some house, pass through it and over the back sheds, and so on, and reach the fire before his opponent. The way he would describe his journey, such as falling over the wash tubs in the back kitchen, shoving the cook down the cellar, tramping to death a dozen or so of pet dorkings, and leaving the seat of his pants in the mouth of the faithful watch-dog, would bring roars of laughter from his listeners.

Faugh was the admiration of the youngsters of the Company. He was looked on by them as one of the greatest men of the time, and we would sit staring up in his face for hours in the engine-house, listening to his yarns, taking them all in as gospel,

never dreaming but that they were all as true as preaching; but, by degrees, our eyes were opened. Still it did not alter our admiration of Faugh, for everything came from him so naturally, and with such earnestness, that I honestly think he believed his yarns himself.

Faugh gave himself away badly on one occasion at a fire. The building was badly gutted, and the roof partly burned off. Our stream was up in the garret, which was an open one, and had a large beam running along the whole length of the building. After the fire was pretty well out, I was prowling about the garret with my lamented friend George Lynch, when I discovered Faugh taking his helmet off the beam where there was still a little fire smouldering, and slip down stairs. I said, "George, did you see Faugh sneaking down stairs?" He replied, "I did not." I said, "Well, he has just taken his helmet off that beam where you see the fire, and I will bet you that he is up to some of his old tricks. Let us go down and see what he is doing." So down we went into the street, and sure enough there was Faugh, with a crowd around him; he had given his everlasting "whew," and attracted their attention. We mentioned the matter to two or three of the other boys, and we all went up to hear what he was saying, for we were a little puzzled to know how he could raise a sensation about such a small matter.

But Faugh's resources were unlimited in such matters. His back was towards us, so that he did not see us, and he had everything his own way; so after drawing the sleeve of his coat across his forehead and giving a "whew," "I tell you, gentlemen," (Faugh always addressed his hearers as gentlemen), "that was a hot place." Now, Faugh's place was at the brakes of the engine, and he had no occasion to go near the fire, but he had to do something to keep up his reputation; so, taking his helmet in his hand and showing the crowd how badly it was burned (and sure enough it was burned to a cinder on one side), and how much he prized it, as it was a presentation from some high dignitary who never existed; but one consolation, he still had it; and, although useless for duty, he could place it alongside of the many other trophies of his narrow escapes. All this time he was stretching his hat on his knee, but it was useless. He had overdone it, and, no doubt, for once his lamentations over his loss was real and truthful. We could stand it no longer, so I called out, "How is your head, Faugh?" The boys laughed and howled. Faugh turned round like a lion and said, "Mind your own business, youngster, or I will 'put a head on you!'"

On another occasion Faugh gave a pretty good illustration of how far he could stretch his imagina-

tion. This occurred at an alarm of fire in upper Bleury street. The Union Company was then stationed in the Haymarket Square, where the fountain now stands, and the "Protector," which Faugh belonged to, was stationed on St. Lambert's Hill. There was considerable rivalry between those two companies, and more than one brush had taken place between them. On this occasion, the "Union" was heading the "Protector" up Bleury street, but we were overtaking them, and as we reached opposite the Jesuits' church, we went to work to cut them out, and when they saw we were going to pass them, they run their ropes across the street to stop us. That was the signal for "out hose keys!" and a little skirmish took place, but to the honor of both companies it did not amount to much. We passed them, and when we returned to the engine house, it became the general topic for conversation, each giving his experience, in no very complimentary terms, of the actions of the Union. Faugh was all this time taking things very coolly, as he generally wound up all arguments. At last out came the well known—"I tell you, Boys, that machine of theirs must be pretty well smashed up; I guess she will want to go to the repair shop." "Why, what is the matter with her ?" said one of the men. "What is the matter," said Faugh; "I guess there is a good deal the matter; you don't suppose we could run over the top of that engine without smashing things." This made everyone

man of deeds rather than words, and only at the earnest request of numerous friends have I consented to the publication of these few reminiscences of my connection with the Fire Department. But what began as a labor has ended as a recreation, and I lay down my pen with a feeling akin to sadness, as I bid farewell to my old comrades of the Brigade, men whom I have learned to honor and respect, whose names are synonymous with bravery and heroism, with all that is most noble in our common humanity. A fireman's life, full of vicissitude, reckless, jovial, mingled joy and sorrow, hard work and few holidays, yet is, in many aspects, a most attractive one, and in it may be found many opportunities of studying mankind. It teems with incidents of wild adventure, of touching pathos, of hair-breadth escapes in the "imminent deadly breach," and again with humorous and hilarious mirth. It is my intention should this, my first humble effort, meet with approval, to return at some future day to the subject, and to recount in a lighter, more enjoyable

way many of those incidents which have fallen to my lot, or to those with whom I have been associated. In the meantime, dear reader, farewell.

"O ye voices gone!
Sounds of other years!
Hush that haunting tone,
Melt me not to tears!
All around forget,
All who loved you well;
Yet sweet voices! yet
O'er my soul ye swell.

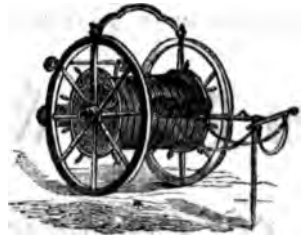
"With the winds of spring,
With the breath of flowers
Floating back, ye bring
Thoughts of vanished hours;
Hence your music take,
O ye voices gone!
This lonely heart ye make,
But more deeply lone."

"Parting is such sweet sorrow,
That I shall say 'good night,' till it be morrow."

LEATHER BELTING

— AND —

LEATHER HOSE FACTORY.



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